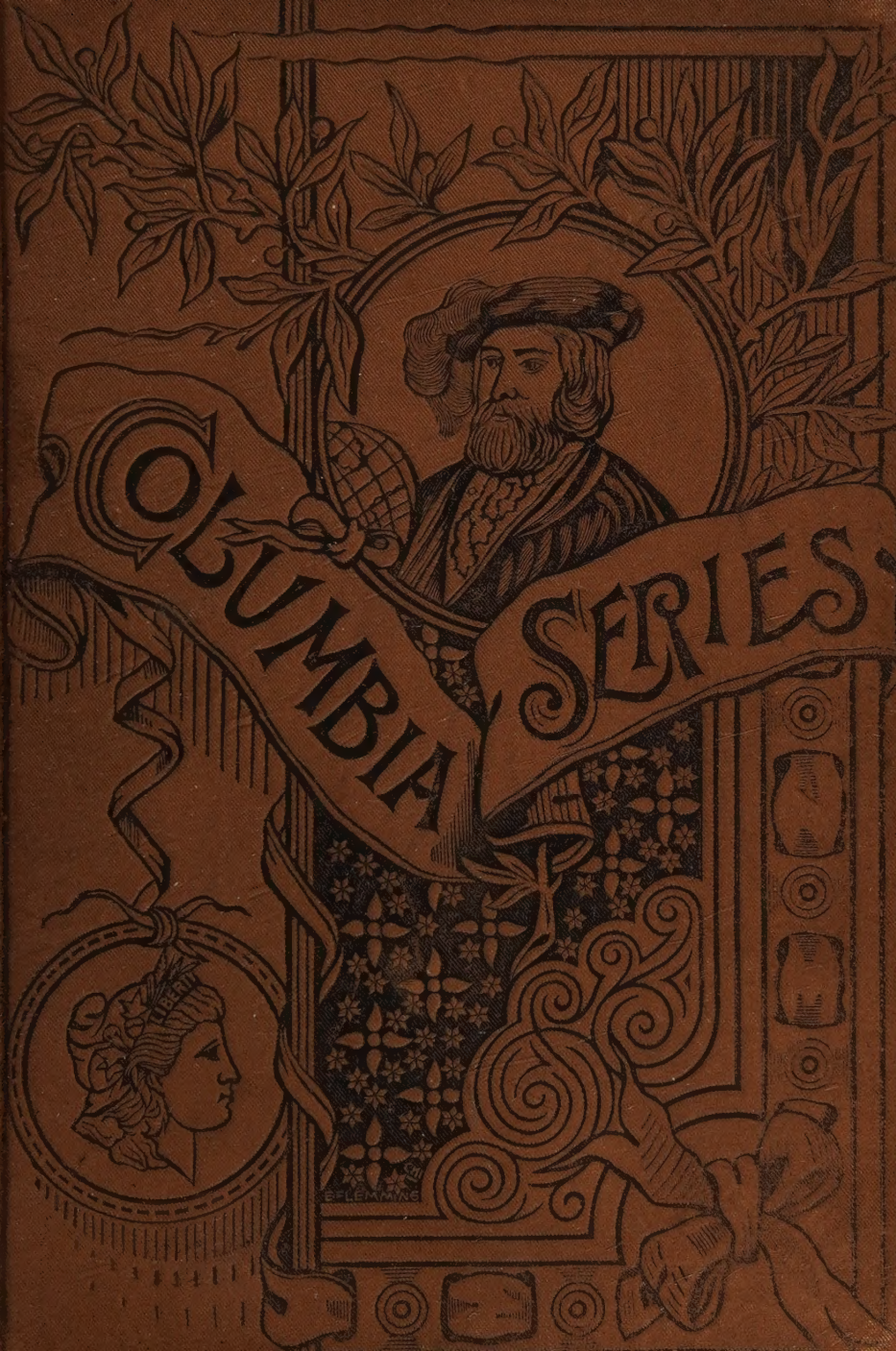
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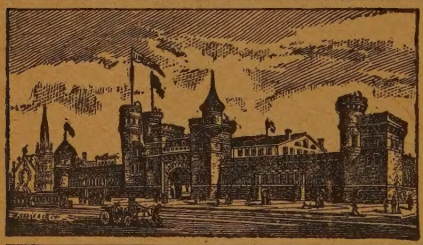

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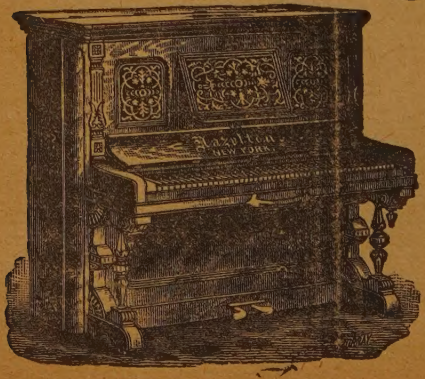

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A ROMANCE OF THE JOHNSTOWN DESTRUCTION, MAY 31, 1889.

By DUKE BAILIE,

Author of "Nora," "The Good Dragon," "Pit's Mouth," Etc.

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DUKE BAILIE.

June 30, 1889.

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THROUGH MIGHTY WATERS SAVED

CHAPTER I.

ON THE DEEP, STILL CONEMAUGH.

BEAUTIFUL in the brightness of early spring evening-time were the placid waters of old Conemaugh Lake, high in the grand mountains of Pennsylvania; and happy voices, merry laughter and rippling melody of occasional song-burst filled the clear, cool atmosphere, rendering the whole scene more like to pictured results of brilliant artistic imagination and skill than mere every-day nature.

It was even before the regular pleasure season, in the year 1889; but glorious weather had tempted pleasure-seekers to their favorite resort, and numerous boats moved slowly or swiftly over the quiet deep.

In one of these small craft sat a young lady and two little girls; there was also a sturdy boy, about fifteen years of age, who handled the oars. The lady was evidently in charge of the party, more especially the girls; her manner was pleasant, and the confidence between all was evidently perfect; yet each moment that her attention was not directly demanded by her charges, her thoughts evidently, as her most expressive

features told, took wings, and sought far different scenes and company from those immediately surrounding.

Truly, she was pleasing to look upon, this Leonora Schombert, a perfect type of German-American beauty. Almost unconscious of self, she sat, trailing one hand in the water, smilingly answering such chatter of the little ones as required reply, and then becoming absorbed in her own reflections. The fair face of this girl had a faint stain of spiritual crimson as seen through its halo of golden hair, which the loveliest tint of the light-red rose never had; and, in the brilliant light of glowing sunset, reflected by the mirror surface of the lake, her graceful figure, in its dark, plain robe, sat like a spirit of true maidenhood, bringing involuntarily to the beholder, like music to the memory, the rich, mellow, tender words of old Jean Paul: "The pure heavens opening in a pure heart, where there can be nothing but love and peace and joy, save the little tear-drops of earthly sorrow and craving that hang upon all our flowers."

The "tear-drops of earthly sorrow and craving" did hang heavily sometimes upon the life-flowers of Leonora. She had no sins, no past to reproach herself with; in all things she had striven to act unselfishly, for the best, to benefit others, and regardless of all sacrifice on her own part. And yet, in moments of self-examination, of retrospect, she had to inquire of her heart if pride had not prompted much and many of her actions, and the longing for "what might have been," the dread that "it could never be *now*," the cry of her soul "Oh for the touch of a vanished hand—for the sound of a voice that's stilled"—these emotions would not be quieted when, as in that hour, they

crowded upon her, and then she doubted her own wisdom, in which she generally so greatly confided, and her spirit yearned for one more touch from that vanished hand, for one more word from that stilled voice, both banished from her by her own words and acts — words and acts of wisdom, she said — "of pride," her heart told her each time she let that heart of hers speak to her.

Very gently had life's current borne this beautiful girl during the years of her existence and through her young maidenhood. Recollections of her native land, and the mother left in the graveyard there, were of naught but happy hours, except when "mother" sickened and died. Then the ever-kind father, tenderly caring for his little daughter, came with her to the United States, and business had prospered with him, and his love surrounded her during home and school days, and she never dreamed that trouble or toil might be her portion, but lived on in joy and the quiet that seemed to be part of her nature, until her father, who believed that it was "not good for man to be alone," took unto himself another wife — a widow, with two daughters of her own — and then Leonora found the thorns among her roses.

Not that the new mother and sisters were actually unkind, but they were cold, and had no thought or sympathy in common with the German maiden; and the dreaming, retiring girl felt that she now only held a portion in her father's heart, where once she had reigned supreme, while with the other members of the enlarged family she could claim no offices of real affection, could enter into no intimacy.

Then there came a change in the manner, a coolness in the words, of Edward Bartine, the man she admired most of all others, quite as much, if not more, even, than she did her father, with whom he had some business connection. A thoughtful, earnest man was this Colonel Bartine, each word and act of his giving evidence of repressed strength of will and power of purpose. A West Point graduate, he had earned his rank as colonel, at an early age, during the civil war; when peace came to the land, he had resigned from the army and entered the profession of mining and civil engineer, in which he stood high among his fellows.

When Leonora returned from school, to take charge of her father's home, she met this gallant soldier, still a young man, and in her heart she enshrined him at once as her hero. Seemingly hard and stern, as the discipline of service in the field had made him, the real loveliness of the girl's character, her beauty, her highly cultivated natural talents, and her magnificent voice, which would have glorified a *prima-donna*, attracted him, in truth captivated him, though he would not acknowledge the latter fact to himself.

But, though he tried, he could not continually sustain the show of friendly indifference which he always endeavored to exhibit toward her. Words and tones, spite of all self-control he might exert, would grow warmer than friendship alone warranted, his eyes would often tell more than his lips as he looked upon her; and on these words, these tones, these looks, Leonora thought and dreamed, and fed her heart with hopes she almost feared to entertain, and, with the shyness of maiden modesty, she became still more guarded in

her conduct and converse with him, fearful ever that she might fall beneath the high standard she knew he placed upon womanly reserve.

Thus it was that, when the rather youthful step-mother and more dashing step-sisters came to share her home, to, by force of numbers and superior self-assertion, take possession of it, the attentions of Colonel Bartine, during his visits, were necessarily divided among the many, there were no more quiet talks, no more evenings of delightful music, in which he could listen, in silent rapture, to her soul-inspiring singing, and Leonora thus neglected, soon retired into the background, leaving the entertainment of the guest to the brilliant beauties who were only too willing to exert themselves in his behalf. And so, greatly through her own course of action, though she knew it not, the two friends drifted apart, their meetings were infrequent, and only occurred when others were present, and their conversation became limited to simple commonplace interchange of every-day topics.

Then her good father died. He had been considered a man of wealth, but his executors found that he, like many other apparently wise business men before him, had ventured much in speculations outside of his legitimate business, that he had left behind him little more than sufficient to pay his debts. Then the second wife and the step-daughters reflected upon his memory, not violently, but with enough of blame to agonize the life of Leonora. They groaned continually about their poverty, and made no effort for self-support. But the native strength, the sterling strength of worth, developed quickly in the child of Germany. She could

work, could earn a home and her food at least, and leave more for those who blamed her parent for the wants they suffered.

Bravely she went out to fight her battle against the world, and bravely she fought it. Her excellent education, her remarkable musical talent and skill, would have enabled her to secure positions far above the one she accepted, but she shrunk from publicity; to hide, rather than find prominence, was her desire. She knew that Colonel Bartine disapproved of women who occupied public place, and, though she did not admit the fact to herself, yet her knowledge of his opinion influenced her, and, as governess, care-taker, and music teacher, she gladly accepted a pleasant home and moderate salary in the family of Mr. Randolph, an official of one of the large works at Johnstown, Penn., and left her father's house with intent to hold herself aloof from all his second connections.

Colonel Bartine she had not seen for a month before her departure. When he called and inquired of the others for her:

"Oh! she has gone to teaching, somewhere up in the mountains," was the answer he received.

And he, self-repression ever being his first impulse, feared to inquire further, lest he might display over-eagerness and undue anxiety regarding her.

His life was a busy one, and though he often thought, and kindly, of the modest, beautiful girl whom he had once sought whenever he could find opportunity, yet, the demands and changes of place of his profession prevented his mind from dwelling upon her too frequently for his peace, and he was always unwilling to

betray such interest in her as would lead him to make more careful inquiries regarding her whereabouts. Besides, he did feel somewhat hurt to think that she could so entirely ignore him as to leave no message, no word of farewell greeting for him, when she left her home.

And she, poor lonely heart, did she ever think of him? Many hours of each day and night she spent in dreaming of him, the only living tie she now possessed to bind her memory to the happy days gone by.

It was not with real unhappiness she thought of him, she was too thankful for the blessings she had enjoyed, and too good, too unmindful of self, to repine at loss of wealth. Still, she could not help wishing that he might think sometimes of her, wondering if he did, trusting that he did.

She should never see him again; oh, no! It were vain to indulge such hope.

CHAPTER II.

A VOICE ON THE WATERS.

YOUNG Randolph, the boy who so well used the oars of the boat in which sat his sisters and their governess, was pulling about generally, without any point in view; they were "out for a row," the first outing of the kind during the year, and they enjoyed it hugely.

Conemaugh Lake was originally the head of Conemaugh Creek, and was formed into a reservoir as part of the old Pennsylvania Canal system. It lay back in the mountains from Johnstown, and about three hun-

dred feet above that borough. When the canal was building the engineers took this little lake to supply the western division of the canal, which ran from there to Pittsburg. The eastern division ended at Hollidaysburgh, east of the summit of the Alleghanies, where there was a similar reservoir. Between the two was the old Portage road, one of the first railroads constructed in the State. The canal was abandoned years ago, as the Pennsylvania company obtained a grant of it from the State, and some years after traffic on the canal ceased, the Hollidaysburgh reservoir was torn down. The water gradually escaped into the Franks-town branch of the Juniata River. The people of the neighborhood objected to the existence of the other reservoir after the canal had been abandoned, as little attention was paid to its repair, and the farmers in the valley below feared that the dam would break and drown them. So the water was all let out of that reservoir, in 1885.

The dam above Johnstown greatly increased the small natural lake there. It was a pleasant drive from Johnstown to this lake; boating and fishing parties made it a place of frequenting. A club called the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club purchased the use of the lake from the Pennsylvania Company; most of the members of this club live in Pittsburg and are prominent in the coal and iron business; officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad are also on its rolls. This organization rebuilt, or increased the size of the original dam until it was over one hundred feet high, and ninety feet at the base, being twenty feet broad on the top, and one-fifth of a mile long. This structure

swelled the lake to three miles in length and a mile and a quarter in width. It was an irregular oval in shape. The volume of water in it depended on the time of the year. In Spring, with melting snows and heavy rains increasing the feeding powers of the streams that run down from the mountains, the lake, or reservoir, was filled to the limits of its banks and the restraining power of "South Fork Dam."

It was upon this deep, splendid sheet of water, that many other parties were rowing about, or directing their course toward the landings that led to the club buildings. The glare of the setting sun had subsided into grayish twilight when, being almost separated from the fleet of pleasure boats, Leonora was begged by the boy, he being seconded by his sisters, to sing for them.

"Do, do, Miss Leo!" they all insisted.

"I always wanted to hear you sing on the water, Miss Leo," said the boy, who was devoted to her with all the chivalry of youth. "I know it would sound splendid; it always does sound splendid at home, but 'twill be better here, and I was just aching to ask you."

"What shall I sing?" asked Leonora, willing to give pleasure to the young people, who were ever so considerate of her.

"Anything, anything!" they cried.

After a moment her voice was heard, only by those in the little boat with her. But gradually, self-forgetfulness came; all about her faded from sight and thought. The memory of one alone was with her, and, as if alone, with no hearers in the wide world, her eyes

closed, as did her mind to all else but the single inspiration, her vibrant contralto voice rang out:

"But in his heart there glows
Life's warmest summer;
Hope shines with golden light,
Love's sweetest comer.
Wrapped in his robes of pride,
Dreams he of meeting;
Smiles as he thinks of me,
Flashes me greeting."

The boy rested his oars and drank in the sweet sounds; the little girls scarce drew their breaths. There was a pause, and again, with her eyelids still closed, and a look that told of bitter-sweet memories upon her face, the lips of Leonora parted, and, in clear but soft, sweet adagio, she sang:

"Nay, 'tis the maiden dreams—
Poor, hapless maiden!
Gone is his love to rest,
By pride o'er-laden.
Grief veils her heart in tears,
Her dream is over;
Dead, with his heart of ice,
Sleepeth her lover."

The song seemed like a cry outbursting from her heart. It was!

She knew not where she had ever seen, or how she had learned, those words — she knew not how she fitted melody to them — both came on the inspiration of the moment, and poured forth as does from the bird its song-volume of joy or pain.

Seeming at far distance, hardly to have been considered within hearing, there was a boat, and in it two men. They were talking in earnest tones; the man

rowing was rather short, thick set, with dark skin, and black, curling hair; his companion, tall, slight of build, soldierly and emphatic in every gesture, had seemed oblivious to everything, except the matter in discussion.

But a moment, two moments, three moments, after that sweet, perfect-toned voice came stealing over the waters, stealing into his ears, and beguiling his senses; recalling to him the past; in those few moments all matters of business were banished from his brain; his companion looked upon him and the change in his face and manner with mute astonishment, and he saw a man transformed when Edward Bartine laid two firm hands upon his shoulders, when the Colonel's proud and noble face glowed with eagerness, and a flush of pleasure lighted up the brown of its healthy tan, and his great hazel eyes, with real star-fire in their liquid shadows, looking straight as honesty could drive them, repeated the question of his lips:

"Randolph, who is that singing?"

George Randolph, for it happened to be the father of the young people in the boat from whence came the song, looked about him, recognized his own children, and replied:

"The youngsters are mine, the young lady is their governess, and a good one, too, with as sweet a voice as ever I heard, sweeter, to my idea, than ever I heard in opera or concert."

"Her name is Leo — Leonora Schombert, is it not?" said Bartine, his manner already much subdued.

"Yes! Do you know her?" asked Randolph.

"I do — or did — I knew her father, and used to meet her at her home," was the answer. Then the

colonel rather abruptly resumed the discussion that had been interrupted, that is, after the song had entirely ceased, but Randolph noticed that his eyes, and evidently much of his thought, continued fixed upon that boat, in which Leonora sat; and until it had reached land, and its occupants had departed beyond range of sight, Colonel Bartine was strangely distraught in manner, nor did the subject he had so earnestly urged, from professional enthusiasm, seem to hold such an exciting interest as before.

It was early night-fall when the two men landed from their boat, and in Randolph's carriage drove rapidly to Johnstown.

"Colonel," said the resident, as he deposited his visitor at the hotel; "I would like to know more about that matter we talked of this afternoon, and, besides, we have had no chance to chat over old times. Can't you come up and spent the night with me? I'd be delighted."

Again the colonel's eyes shone with eager longing. George Randolph had been a captain in his regiment during the war, and a favorite officer. But it was not to talk of old war times that Bartine desired to accept that invitation. It was the hope, the intense longing, grown greater by long waiting, to see once more Leonora Schombert, to be near her, to watch her quiet grace, and listen to her lovely voice.

The temptation was too strong for him to resist:

"I thank you, captain, I will be glad to come and —meet your family."

"Shall I call for you, colonel."

"Thanks, no! I remember your house, up there

where you pointed it out to me, and I will have no trouble in finding my way. I daresay there are letters here I must answer before I can come up."

"Well, come as soon as you can," said Randolph, and drove off.

At the tea-table, an hour after, he remarked to his wife, though his eyes were fixed upon Leonora:

"Colonel Bartine was out on the lake with me this afternoon. He will be up here this evening, and, I hope, will stay all night with us."

"Colonel Bartine!" involuntarily exclaimed Leonora.

"Yes, Miss Leo, my old colonel, Edward Bartine. Did you ever meet him?" said Randolph, in a quiet tone.

"I — he — he was a friend of my father's," she replied. "How strange that he should come here."

"Not at all strange, that I can see," said Randolph, pleasantly. "He is my old commander and comrade. I think it very natural he should come here."

"Oh! I mean how strange that I should meet him here," she faltered.

"Well, Miss Leo, you can explain the strangeness when you see him to-night. I rather think he is anxious to renew your old acquaintance."

Disappointment sat heavy upon Captain George Randolph as the hours passed. Heart-sickness laid its power upon Leonora as hope of seeing "her hero" departed with the fleeting minutes.

Edward Bartine did not come.

He never entered that house.

CHAPTER III.

A HOME BY RIPPLING, PEACEFUL STREAMS.

JOHNSTOWN, Pennsylvania, the scene of our story and the historic events recorded on these pages, was a thriving city, of bustling activity, wealth, thrift and thorough American enterprise.

Nestled cozily at the foot of three hills, which meet in a double V shape, it presented to the visitor, or one who caught a hasty glimpse of its evident prosperity while passing through on the railroad cars, a picture that told its own story of bold capitalists who feared not to enter into undertakings of vast magnitude, of well-paid and well-contented employés and workers who could rationally enjoy the good things of life and sensibly employ the surplus of their earnings in acquirement, by purchase or renting, of homes where comfort and plenty surrounded their families and themselves.

The exact geographical situation of the locality may be most briefly given, thus:

Pennsylvania is divided, hydrographically, into three divisions. The first is the great Eastern slope, which descends from the primary watershed to the tide-water plane of the Atlantic seaboard. Through this runs the Susquehanna. Parallel with it, and subject to very much the same conditions, flows the Potomac. Running into the Susquehanna, the one at Northumberland and the other near Harrisburg, are the west branch of the main river and the Juniata. The former of these crosses the mountains to feed the largest river of the Middle Atlantic Basin; the

latter rises in the eastern slope of the mountains and within the Atlantic watershed. The second hydrographic division of the State is an irregular trough, its uniformity being broken by the characteristic division of the Appalachian system into parallel mountain ranges. It is watered by the feeders of the Ohio River.

It is here was built Johnstown, and it is here that the Conemaugh River takes its rise, in Conemaugh Lake, or the Reservoir, or South Fork Dam, all the three names being given to that sheet of water. The trough at this point is between the Alleghany Mountains and Laurel Hills. The mountains in this part of the system, of which they form a portion, do not rise to a great height, and the great valley is nearly as accessible to railroads and other means of communication as the plain countries farther west. In dry weather the streams are low, and frequent dams are essential to make them available for water-power.

The Conemaugh at Johnstown has a feeder of its own, known as Stony Creek. The stream begins some distance east of Johnstown, and runs to the borough, where it is joined by Stony Creek. The river passes under a heavy stone railway bridge, and by the neighboring village of Cambria; then it continues westward, makes its way by Blairsville to the Kiskiminitas, which is one of the principal feeders of the Alleghany river.

The third hydrographical division of the State is a small slope in Erie County, which declines to the lake.

Johnstown, then, was situated in a triangle of low-lying land; the embankment of the Pennsylvania

Railroad on one side of the plain, and above the site of the town; the river swept around it. The waters of both river and creek are generally quiet and placid, although swift, and the scenery is charming. Blue mountains in continuous lines, without peaks, covered with forests, cleft for the passage of the mountain streams, make the background of the picture on every side. Very near, on the Conemaugh, is the "Pack-Saddle," celebrated in the scenery of the State and the country.

As quite the busiest manufacturing town of its size, Johnstown was noted throughout this busy land. It was made and is largely owned by the Cambria Iron Company, one of the most extensive and flourishing organizations of its kind in Pennsylvania. Conemaugh was near it, and the two together were called Johnstown City. The streets of the two towns ran into each other, and all the intervening space was well built up along the creek.

In its various furnaces and mills, the Cambria Company employed about five thousand people. The community consisted largely of workingmen, and their families, who lived, if not in small houses of their own, mostly in wooden structures, built in rows, on the flats, and owned by the corporation. The officers of the company, the merchants and professional men of Johnstown, had their homes on the hills. There were churches, schools, a public library, hotels, halls — all buildings and institutions that tend to render a town worthy, as this was, of the age and country in which we live.

The recent growth of the population of Johnstown

has been very rapid; in 1880, the inhabitants numbered 8,380. In May, 1889, it contained 10,000, and from 25,000 to 30,000 dwelt in its immediate vicinity. Other manufacturing establishments had followed the iron-works, and a string of villages stretched up the valley for several miles. There were Conemaugh, Cambria, Millvale, South Fork, Mineral Point, Morrellville, and Woodvale.

Ten miles, about, from Johnstown, was the dam owned by the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, a description of which was given in the preceding chapter. Originally there was a series of waste gates in solid masonry at the base of the dam, which was calculated to carry off any dangerous surplus of water that did not find an outlet by a sluiceway which was built around the dam. When the club leased the dam, it was in bad condition. The waste gates and their machinery were useless, and it is said they were not repaired because, as some people allege, they were too far gone to ruin, while others assert that the club kept them closed in order that the fish might not escape. The club is said to have made some improvements, but the structure seems to have been a mass of earth and shale, without any masonry of importance.

Johnstown was built upon the site of an old Indian town called Kickenopawling. About the year 1791 an enterprising German, Joseph Johns (he spelled his name "Yahns"), settled there, and the original title deeds of many of the town lots are in his name. As this was the head of navigation to those seeking the Western waters, it speedily became a place of shipment for the iron of Huntingdon County, and for the lumber

and produce of the vicinity, as well as the emigration destined for the West. Arks and flatboats were then the only means of conveyance. The place was at that time called Conemaugh. With the march of progress, the Alleghany & Portage Railroad was constructed between Johnstown and Hollidaysburg, a distance of thirty-nine and one-half miles. It crosses the summit at Blair's Gap and descends along the mountain branch of the Conemaugh. The highest point of the road is 2,700 feet above the Delaware River at Philadelphia.

Seventy-eight miles east of Pittsburg, thirty-nine miles southwest of Altoona, is the distance from each, by Pennsylvania Railroad measurement, that Johnstown is situated. The Cambria Iron Works, the great industry which built up and supported the town and its suburbs, originated in a few widely separated charcoal furnaces, built by pioneer iron-workers in the early years of the century. As early as 1803, General Arthur St. Clair engaged in the iron business, and erected the Hermitage furnace, about sixteen miles from the present site of Johnstown. In 1809 the working of ores was begun near the place. There were primitive furnaces, where charcoal was the only fuel employed, and the raw material and product were transported entirely on wagons, but they marked the beginning of the manufacture of iron in this country.

At the present time, besides owning the flats in the valley, the Cambria Company are proprietors of the surrounding hills. In one of these hills is limestone, in another, coal; and there is iron ore in abundance not far away. The company has narrow-gauge roads running from its mines to the works. The hills are

several hundred feet high, and so steep that roads run up them by a series of zig-zag grades; they are not so far distant but that a man with a rifle, on any one of them, could shoot and hit an object on either of the others.

It was in this nest, this hollow, as it were, of a giant, mountainous hand, that Johnstown, its outputs, and all its ever-busy industries, lay, with its frame of overlooking hill-tops, its outlying border of forest, and the rippling, dashing, thin, silver-like threads of Conemaugh and Stony River and Creek, merrily singing their way about its feet, or when spring floods came to swell their waters, giving only a pleasurable excitement to those who witnessed their short-lived, impotent brawling, and harmless overflow.

And above, deep, quiet, peaceful, was the great lake of Conemaugh, enlarged far beyond its natural size by South Fork Dam; a model pleasure resort.

Verily, for all who lived in this valley of peace and plenty and content, their "lines had fallen in pleasant places."

CHAPTER IV.

STORM CLOUDS ARE GATHERING.

GEORGE RANDOLPH was disappointed by the non-appearance of Colonel Bartine, in fulfillment of his engagement for the evening, after their row on the lake and drive home. But he never thought to lay the charge of willful neglect against his comrade; he felt confident that the colonel had good reasons for his absence, and, after waiting until so late an hour that he

knew there was not the least probability of a visit, he closed his house and went to bed — and sleep.

To no such peace of mind could Leonora Schombert compose herself. She had been strangely agitated by hearing, so suddenly and unexpectedly, the name of the man who ever filled the largest measure of her thought; it grieved her to think he had been so near to her that evening, and she had not been able to gain one glimpse of him. A medley of pain and pleasure, hope and fear, desire and shrinking, had taken possession of her when she heard that she was to meet him under the roof of her employer, and she tried to think and to arrange within herself how she should meet him, how approach and receive his greeting, how control her words, her voice and her looks. She hoped, eagerly hoped, that she might have opportunity to speak to him, if only a few words, unheard and unobserved by others, and yet she trembled at the thought of so doing.

Doubts once more assailed her, more strongly than ever before, as to whether she had not been unwise in withdrawing herself from the friendship that once existed between them; whether the cool, seeming indifference with which she had resigned his company to those who had invaded her father's heart and home, had not been evidence of such willing relinquishment as to rouse the pride of a man, especially a man like Colonel Bartine, and cause him to think her a silly, capricious girl, who was unworthy further thought or attention; and again tormenting ideas haunted her, that vanity alone, on her part, had ever led her to imagine that " her hero " could possibly take more than a pass-

ing interest in her. She knew that he was passionately fond of music, and she knew, too, her strength in that direction. Possibly it was that alone had attracted him formerly, and he had only cared for the song, not for the singer.

Ah, well! she would exert her utmost power of analysis to read the riddle when he came that night, and govern her manner according to his own.

And so she sat and waited, outwardly calm, but with every pulse of her heart surging, every sense strained in listening for the step she felt she could recognize afar, and longed in her soul to hear.

But he never came.

She sought her little room, this poor, lonely one, feeling that truly she was deserted of the world — that life was not worth the living, and her night was spent in tears and self-reproaches, in prayers and wonderings. Sleep came not to refresh her body or bring forgetfulness to her mind.

When Randolph, at the breakfast table, explained to his wife that he felt sure Bartine had been detained by business letters, or some other perfectly excusable reason, from presenting himself the night before, Leonora listened eagerly, and hope came to cheer her, that she would yet see him, that day or that evening, and pain and weariness were banished, and she blamed herself for the foolish tortures of the past hours.

The captain stopped at the hotel on his way to business and inquired for Colonel Bartine.

"Left last night on the early train," answered the clerk. "He found telegrams waiting for him, and had to make first connections, he told me. Wrote a note

to you, and asked me to send it up to the house. To tell the truth, captain, I neglected to do so, but I sent it down to your office about half an hour ago. You'll find it when you get there!" and the airy young clerk turned to some one else, feeling that he had performed his whole duty in the matter.

The note was awaiting Randolph at his office; he opened it and read:

THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1889, 6:30 p. m.

DEAR CAPTAIN — I find telegrams awaiting me that require I should take next train to Philadelphia, and so, much to my regret, I am obliged to resign the pleasure of spending this evening with you and your family. When I come this way again, if I can possibly arrange to stop over, I hope to enjoy keeping the postponed engagement.

I want you to remember what I told you about that work at South Fork. I am not an opinionated man in most things, but I do know my business; and every professional instinct and every atom of professional knowledge and training I possess, tell me that your South Fork dam is unsafe. It is a continual, deadly menace to the people, the homes and the business of your valley. Stir yourself about this with your old-time energy, see whoever has authority to make necessary repairs and improvements, and use every argument and means in your power to induce them to strengthen, most materially, the work that now holds that immense body of death-dealing water. You know that, when I write this, after what I said to you yesterday, I must feel strongly on the subject, and you know that, when I write thus, I mean what I say and know whereof I speak. You and I have been in terrible battles together, but, I tell you, if that dam is not strengthened, the result to your people will be worse than all the battles we ever saw, rolled into one. If you cannot effect anything, get out of this valley of death, even if you have to resign your position; take your family, all in your household, away from the power of the threatening evil, let it cost you what it may.

In haste, ever truly yours,

BARTINE.

To say that the emphatic words and warning of this note did not cause very considerable disquietude to Captain Randolph, would not be truth. He had the

strongest faith in the wide intelligence, the professional skill and wisdom of his former colonel, and he knew him for a man who never ventured an opinion recklessly, and in his experience with the man he had never known Bartine to adopt such a decided tone or to express such an unqualified opinion.

He did approach and enter into conversation, argument, and remonstrance with some of the substantial citizens, business men and officers of his company. Several of them agreed with him that, " it was a shame, the condition of that dam; that there would be the very dickens-and-all to pay if the work were to break; that something ought to be done; that there ought to be a meeting, or a protest, or something, to force the club to take proper precautions and strengthen the dam."

But none of these were willing to take the time, or trouble, or risk of offending the rich members of the club, and to make first move in the matter, or to prominently second Randolph if he should take the initiative.

Others there were who laughed to scorn the " regular periodical *skeer!* " and asked the captain if he had not heard that old, old story, that cry of " Wolf! " and the breaking dam, until he was tired of it. " They were — sick and tired of it, and it was all nonsense. Did he suppose men like the members of South Fork Club were going to risk the lives of thousands, their property and *their money*, by allowing that dam to so weaken that it would break? "

" I'll tell you what, Randolph! " said one, " I don't know your colonel, and he may be the very grand fel-

low you say he is, and believe him to be, and the best engineer that ever laid a level. But it's just my private opinion, meaning no offense to you or him either, that he sees a chance for a good, big job there, at swinging figures and rousing profit for himself, and he's working on your fears to bring about the rebuilding of the dam. If you and I live, old fellow, until South Fork Dam bursts or breaks down, old Methuselah will have been a baby-in-arms, in years, compared to us!"

And thus they met the captain's explanation of his fears, and his reasons for them, until he was tired, or ashamed of introducing the subject, and meeting only with acquiescence that resulted in no action, or ridicule of his own fears and the opinion of the man he so entirely respected and looked up to as a superior. He said nothing to his wife of the alarm which agitated him. He proposed to her, assuming a careless tone, that she and the rest of the family should go to Altoona, or to Philadelphia and Atlantic City, for two or three months. But the good lady replied that it was too early in the season to leave home; her own and her children's summer "things" had not yet been prepared, and "the first week in June, or thereabouts, would be plenty of time."

And so, after a week or so of more or less worry over the matter, in the cares of business, and absence of further discussion on the subject, Randolph allowed his colonel's warning to fade from his mind, or only recalled it to banish it quickly as possible, as if it were the forerunner of a feverish nightmare.

There was some little reason for his incredulity on

the subject. For years the people of the valley had had repeated warnings given them that the dam at South Fork was unsafe, and, at first, efforts had been made to prevent its reconstruction by the club. Injunctions were talked of to restrain the increase of the height, when that addition was made, and the consequent increase of pressure. Engineers, of every degree of repute, had pronounced against it, but to no purpose. The subject became threadbare — worn out — and the people grew, as they said, "sick and tired" of hearing of a disaster that never came. Occasionally rumor raised a loud voice, and proclaimed that the waters were about to burst through their barriers. Men had, on sundry occasions, ridden down the valley crying to the people to "take to the mountains;" but all these alarms ever proved false, and, at each repetition, the few who were frightened by them grew less in number, and the many who laughed to scorn the prophets of evil, increased by a large majority.

And Colonel Bartine, in Philadelphia, in New York, in Colorado, and again in the East, as the demands upon his professional services kept him incessantly moving, he often, in his busiest hours, and still more often in the quiet night-time, thought of the danger that had so vividly presented itself before his eyes, and wondered what use Randolph had made of his warning, and if any steps had been taken, or were about to be taken, to prevent what he believed must inevitably come. And he was always "going to write," and put off doing so from time to time, partly, in truth, because he felt that he could not write to the Captain without making inquiry concerning Leonora Schombert, and,

with the secretiveness on such matters which had become second-nature to him, he feared that even the slightest reference to her would betray the keenness of his feelings.

But his interest in the girl, his disappointment in not having seen her at the last-offered and unlooked-for opportunity, and his longing to meet her once again — if only once again — all these sensations grew stronger for the close guard he kept upon them in his own bosom, and in about a month after he had left Johnstown, having a week of comparative leisure, his desires became too strong for his resolutions, and he yielded, unwillingly, and took train to go, as he said, "to pay a visit to Randolph."

Participation with comrades at Pittsburg, on Memorial Day, detained him in that city during May 30th, but the next morning he started for Johnstown, making calculation of the time he should reach there early in the evening, and be with his ex-captain, and the captain's family, that night.

And Leonora had waited and hoped, during those weary weeks, that she might hear something, if only a word, concerning him. But his name was never mentioned in her hearing, and so she had gradually quieted her heart once more, as before, and sought to find other interests and partial distraction in close attention to her duties.

CHAPTER V.

"TO THE HILLS FOR YOUR LIVES!"

Into the town of Conemaugh,
Striking the people's souls with awe,
Dashed a rider, aflame and pale,
Never alighting to tell his tale,
Sitting his big bay horse astride,
"Run to the hills for your lives!" he cried;
"Run to the hills," was what he said,
As he waved his hand and dashed ahead.

"Run for your lives to the hills!" he cried,
Spurring his horse, whose reeking side
Was flecked with foam as red as flame.
Whither he goes and whence he came
Nobody knows. They see his horse
Plunging on in his frantic course,
Veins distended and nostrils wide,
Fired and frenzied at such a ride.
Nobody knew the rider's name—
Dead forever to earthly fame.
"Run to the hills! to the hills!" he cried;
"Run for your lives to the mountain side!"

"Stop him! he's mad! just look at him go!
'Tain't safe," they said, "to let him ride so."
"He thinks to scare us," said one, with a laugh,
"But Conemaugh folks don't swallow no chaff.
'Tain't nothing, I'll bet, but the same old leak
In the dam above the South Fork Creek."
Blind to their danger, callous of dread,
They laughed as he left them and dashed ahead.
"Run for your lives to the hills!" he cried,
Lashing his horse in his desperate ride.

Down through the valley the rider passed,
Shouting and spurring his horse on fast;
But not so fast did the rider go
As the raging, roaring, mighty flow
Of the million feet and the millions more

Of water whose fury he fled before.
On he went, and on it came,
The flood itself a very flame
Of surging, swirling, seething tide,
Mountains high and torrents wide.
God alone might measure the force
Of the Conemaugh flood in its V-shaped course.
Behind him were buried under the flood
Conemaugh town and all who stood
Jeering there at the man who cried,
"Run for your lives to the mountain side!"

On he sped in his fierce, wild ride.
"Run to the hills! to the hills!" he cried.
Nearer, nearer came the roar
Horse and rider fled before.
Dashing along the valley ridge,
They come at last to the railroad bridge.
The big horse stood, the rider cried,
"Run for your lives to the mountain side!"
Then plunged across, but not before
The mighty, merciless mountain roar
Struck the bridge and swept it away
Like a bit of straw or a wisp of hay.
But over and under and through that tide
The voice of the unknown rider cried:
"Run to the hills! to the hills!" it cried—
"Run for your lives to the mountain side!"

JOHN ELIOT BOWEN.

May 31, 1889. Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

The above date will be remembered, recorded, while the history of this land exists.

It had been raining for many days before this date. Great floods exended over a wide region of the country, embracing the whole State of Pennsylvania, a part of New York, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Millions on millions of dollars could not cover the losses on property.

Johnstown, Conemaugh and the attendant train of

villages, had never before suffered from such a downpour and excess of water. The streams in the great valley, and on both sides of the Appalachian range were filled to choking. The earth was saturated and could hold no more. Day after day the clouds emptied down their contents into the streams that ran out of and across the mountains of Pennsylvania and New York, into the Ohio Basin on one side, and the middle Atlantic slope on the other. The rivers and brooks rose brawling, and the lakes and ponds began to overflow their dams.

Just before Friday, the 31st of May, still a greater storm hung over the hills and valleys of the middle Atlantic watershed, the Ohio River Basin, and the drainage basins of Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron. Rain fell, and fell, and fell on, for hours and hours, its quantity was enormous. Four and a half inches marked about the average fall for even a few hours measurement. When this last burst came, there was absolutely no power of absorption left in the ground. The water ran off the resisting surface, and into the streams, which were even then gorged and dangerous, and the floods came.

Johnstown, Conemaugh, all the villages, looked on the rising waters of the river and creek, and enjoyed somewhat the excitement of their unusual rise. That was all.

But John G. Parke, a young Philadelphian, a civil engineer, an honor to his profession and manhood, he saw where deadly danger lurked, no fear of ridicule prevented him from seeking the fountain head of death. His keen eye detected, his experience and

training taught him, that the fast increasing waters of Conemaugh Lake must either have additional outlets to those provided, or that South Fork Dam would inevitably give way.

And then!

Hastily gathering a force of thirty Italian laborers, he set them to work, to work for the lives of thousands, in preparing an extra sluice. In half an hour his purpose was accomplished, but still the water continued to rise.

Up, and up, and up, the water rose, at the rate of six, seven, eight, then ten inches an hour.

Something had to be done then, and quickly, too. No time to call meetings, to arrange resolutions, and write protests now.

Giving orders to his men to cut another outlet, John G. Parke jumped upon his horse and started at breakneck speed toward the village below.

As he dashed along he warned the people on every hand of their danger, and many, impressed by the terrible earnestness of the man, fled to the hills for safety.

Reaching South Fork Station, he telegraphed the warning to Johnstown, and two men started out on horseback to the city, spreading the dread tidings as they rode.

Robert Miller and David Lucas stood near the Woodvale bridge, between Maple avenue and Portage street, in Johnstown, watching the raging river, and discussing the stability of the bridges.

Said Lucas: "This bridge don't seem to be weakened; I guess it will stand."

A strange, unusual sight met the eyes of these men

as a roaring, thunderous sound caused them to glance up the river.

Miller tells of it: "We saw a dark object rolling, pitching down. Over it was a white mist. It was high and, somehow, dreadful. Dark smoke seemed to form a background for the mist. We did not wait for more. By instinct we knew the big dam had burst, and its water was coming upon us.

"Lucas jumped on a car-horse, rode across the bridge, and went yelling into Johnstown. The flood overtook him, and he had to abandon his horse and climb a high hill.

"I went straight to my house in Woodvale, warning everybody as I ran. My wife and mother-in-law were ready to move, with my five children, so we went for the hillside, but we were not speedy enough. The water had come over the flat at its base and cut us off. I and my wife climbed into a coal car with one of the children, to get out of the water. I put two more children into the car, and looked around for my other little ones and their grandmother. She was a stout woman, weighing over two hundred pounds. She could not climb into the car. The train was too long for her to go around it, so she tried to crawl under, leading the way for the children.

"The train was suddenly pushed forward by the flood; she was knocked down and crushed; so were my children, by the same shock. My wife and children in the car were thrown down and covered with coal. I was taken off by the water, but I swam to the car and pulled them from under the coal. A second blow to the train threw the car against the hillside,

and us out of it to firm earth. I never saw my children or my wife's mother again."

DANIEL PEYTON!

Blazon his name high on the roll of martyrs for humanity's sake.

He was rich. Better, he was noble!

At Conemaugh he heard the message that brave Parke sent humming down the wires from South Fork.

His great bay horse stood ready to his master's hand, a fitting steed for a gallant deed. No thought for self or danger in this young hero's breast. He was astride in a flash. Lay hoofs to ground, good bay, as never in all your life you did before!

Over the stones, and down the pike that passes through Conemaugh to Johnstown, thundered, thundered the horse, bearing onward, onward, the self-forgetting Peyton, and his voice rang out, as his free hand waved:

"South Fork dam will burst! To the hills for your lives! To the hills for your lives!"

A few heeded the calls that meant life, the many laughed and jeered, and said:

"We don't skeer easy!" and "We've heard that too often before."

And one party went on to the church to be married. Funeral services were continued in another sacred edifice.

And in several places a number of men looked out of doors and windows and mockingly cheered the pale, shouting rider, who seemed to be trying to kill his horse or the people in the streets, and then they turned back and ordered more drink.

Others stood in the rain and looked after the galloping horse and the man who cried: "To the hills for your lives! to the hills!" and said he was a drunken fool and should be arrested for alarming people and abusing his animal in such a manner.

Never a thought to seek safety for himself had Daniel Peyton. Still faster on he urged the great bay horse; well still did the bay respond, and to the beating of his iron-shod hoofs clear rang the refrain of the rider:

"To the hills for your lives! For your lives to the hills!"

Through the streets, without stumble or break, they went. They turned to cross the railroad bridge.

Their work ended!

Crashing death came down upon the rider and the horse. They lay beneath massive timbers—Dead.

Write Daniel Peyton's name side by side with all who ever rode to glory in battle for life or against it; and write with it "Hero," "Martyr." "Into the jaws of death, into the gates——"

Up to the Gates of Heaven, he rode. Death dismounted him at the threshold, but its grand portals opened wide, and, as he entered, we imagine, every noble spirit there hailed him as, "Comrade!"

And one heroic woman faces the common herd, and this is the moment to present her in a glorious companionship with Daniel Peyton.

The telegram that John G. Parke sent from South Fork Station to Johnstown was received by a woman in charge of the telegraph station.

She was told, ordered to quit her station while yet

she could. She remained at her post — assisted by her office force, until all means of escape, all hope of safety, were abandoned. Her firm hands, her unswerving courage, kept sounding through the talking threads of metal, even when the shadows of eternity had gathered about her — kept sending the cry of warning, "To the hills, for your lives! — to the hills for your lives!"

MRS. H. M. OGLE and her loyal command.

A soldiers' widow she, and never soldier had a braver soldier-wife. Charles Ogle, her husband, was the first man of Somerset County, Pa., to volunteer for service in the civil war; at Malvern Hills battle he died a soldier's death, killed in action. Then his widow faced life for support of her little ones. Learning telegraphy she soon gained position and promotion. Faithful in all things was she. Twenty years she was manager of the Western Union Telegraph Company's office in Johnstown. Superintendent Rowe of the Western Union Telegraph Company at Pittsburg, her immediate superior, says of her: "She was a noble woman in every respect, and one of the best managers of the service, being keenly alive to the interests of the company at all times, and under all circumstances." She was beloved by the entire community at Johnstown, and particularly by the telegraph employés at Pittsburg, elsewhere, who came in contact with her in a business way; to these she was "Mother Ogle." Life was within her grasp for hours. Orders from her superior officer, could not force her from her duty. Entreaties from her own children could not weaken her sense of honor, and the certainty of death to her loved daughter, never prompted a thought of desertion of her

post. One of her sons went for her, with a boat, at nine o'clock on the morning of the flood, and urged her to leave the threatened station. "My Place Is Here!" was her reply. She scorned even the words of refusal. "My Place Is Here!" that answered all. She was talked with over the wire from the Pittsburg office, a few moments before the final disaster; then she said that there was five feet of water on and above the office floor, but she was apparently calm and perfectly self-possessed.

Her last words sent to her superior:

"This is my last message."

Her last words on earth.

She marshaled her forces — three women stood side by side with her; four men were worthy to accompany them. They stood by "Mother" Ogle to the death.

She led them out; they went together.

Where?

To safety forevermore — to "the hills eternal."

She reported — for herself and her little, all-glorious band — she reported to the God who alone can sufficiently reward those who lay down their lives for others.

"We have done our duty!"

"Well done, good and faithful servants." Cannot the ears of faith hear, ringing from heaven, that gladdening, recompensing welcome?

MRS. H. M. OGLE, MANAGER.
MINNIE OGLE, OPERATOR.
GRACE GORMAN, OPERATOR.
MARY J. WATKINS, OPERATOR.
JOHN QUINN, MESSENGER.

WILLIAM GAITLIEN, MESSENGER.
JAMES MCHENRY, MESSENGER.
H. A. JACKSON, LINEMAN.

DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY AT JOHNSTOWN, PA., ON FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1889.

They could die; they could not desert.

Inscribe their names — this heroic band — upon the tablets of memory, upon the pages of history, deep on a monument that shall endure for ages.

Oh! the pity of it all!

No! the glory — the glory of it!

Did ever soldier on battle-field die so grand, so noble a death as these?

They died to save!

Johnstown, Conemaugh, all those bee-hive hamlets, were in and of the Valley of Death.

For South Fork Dam *had* broken!

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT, WILD WAVE OF DEATH.

SOUTH FORK DAM *was* gone!

The mighty waters of Conemaugh Lake, in one high, solid, wall-like mass, were hurling, with resistless, relentless force, upon the doomed people of that beautiful valley.

It was one o'clock of the day when those derided, ridiculed messengers of mercy urged their steeds, with frantic haste, in, among and almost over the few who regarded their hoarse cries of warning and the multitude who mocked at their errand of salvation.

The barriers between the piled-up waters of Conemaugh Lake and the thousands of human beings unconsciously waiting the swift-coming destruction — the barrier, the South Fork Dam — did not *break* — it *melted*, it dissolved away into nothingness, and, in a space to which a moment were an hour, in the least fraction of a heart-beat of time, the heaped-up torrent burst with a bound, and went rushing, crushing, crashing, roaring upon its prey.

South Fork, Mineral Point, Mooreville, Conemaugh, Woodvale, Cambria, all were there, peopled with happy, undreading souls, when the noon bells of that fated day rang out. Where were they when the shades of night gathered over that Valley of Desolation?

And Johnstown, that hive of industry, where *were* it and its inhabitants?

Can words describe the appalling disaster; can human lips or pen of man tell the tale of horror?

Nature has not so exerted its destructive powers on this continent within historic times. We must go back to Herculaneum and Pompeii for the story of a like catastrophe.

The freed waters seemed to spurn the earth; they curled and leaped, and gathered together, and rushed on in mighty, solid mass, twenty, thirty, forty feet high — roaring, clawing, beating down and eating up the victims.

It was upon them, the towns, the people and their homes, before they could realize that it, that any danger, was coming — was there.

As it reached the villages, the houses tottered, raised in the wild flood, whirled and writhed, and, yielding

to the incalculable force, were swept from the places that knew them. They crashed one against the other, and then faded into innumerable fragments. Brick and stone buildings were but as the cardboard tents of child's play before this awful, devilish force. All All vestiges of foundations, all traces of deepest cellars disappeared.

Human creatures had not even time to form a thought, to exercise a moment of invention, for means of escape.

The wave of death carried its wreckage with it. It was not only deadly, but it was swift to kill.

Conemaugh Lake was emptied of its enormous volume of water in less than two hours.

By that time the Fury, the Monster — had reached Johnstown — and Johnstown was destroyed.

Part of the brick walls of the furnaces and mills of the Cambria Company were left, but the interiors of the buildings were in ruins.

The raging torrent knocked out only a corner of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Station, but swept its contents off the bridge. It was the railroad bridge against which buildings and human beings were rushed, and there they were stopped. Churches and great structures were crushed, knocked to pieces as though they were toy-houses of straw.

The town was lifted from its foundations. Thousands of men, women and children were caught up, carried on, driven under, swirled midway, in the grasp and plunge of the mad water-demon, and their cries of agony, their short-lived appeals for help, rose high above the crash of their ruined, demolished homes.

The mass of wreck, water, dead bodies and drowning souls, rushed down into the mouth of the gorge against the stone bridge, that stood firm to aid in the work of destruction. The wreckage caught on the solid masonry. Fast it accumulated into a dam, a raft, the material of which was such as never was collected for like purpose. It clung to the bridge, and the hollow of the hill. It gathered strength with every added piece, small or great, and with every creature's body that was crushed, and wedged, and ground to atoms within it, and it warped and wove, and knitted and wedged them all together into a tangled wall, closing up half the outlet toward which the waters hurled their flood. House after house, driftwood, men, women, and children, railway cars, great locomotives, were all added to this terrible barrier until it became a packed mass, firm and solid, from thirty to sixty feet thick, rising high above the boiling, surging waters, and stretching back three-fourths of a mile along the curve of the hill.

From some cause, ever to remain unknown, fire added its consuming horrors to the fearful scene, and flame crept, gradually at first, over the upper part of the raft of wreckage. At first it burned slowly, and a long line of smoke was seen lazily mounting and thinly drifting into the air. It looked to those who distractedly watched this new element of destruction, as if a funeral pyre had been lighted,and a funeral pyre it was, indeed, for on that strangely composite mass were crowds of human beings, all ages, sexes and conditions. They had remained in or on fragments of their destroyed houses, believing it better to there trust

themselves than risk battling with the mad waters. When these saw the timbers on fire, they realized their awful situation, and their screams soon joined in the terrible chorus of horror. They were literally roasted alive, floating on the flood.

The horrors of that fearful eve can never fade from before the eyes of those forced to stand, helpless to render aid, and watch that wild wave do its deadly work. On the hills these people stood. They saw men, women and children go to their doom. Some of them rode on the roofs of houses that less than an hour before they had considered as havens of absolute security — others had grasped passing trees, planks or telegraph poles. As these were carried in toward the hill which the stream struck, they endeavored to seize hold of tree branches or of ropes that were thrown to them, and in many cases the people on the banks saw men give over to women and children the means of safety, and themselves go on — down to certain death.

The river had risen from six to forty feet. The waters were mad; they twisted this way and that. Sometimes they appeared to run upon edge. The flood carried a wall before it, a wall composed of buildings, trees, rocks, machinery and contents of houses, horses and cattle, great masses of crumbling earth, and dead and drowning human beings.

At times the water behind seemed to rise up and take a header over that in front. It was full of freaks and changes. It not only hurled its burden against the bridge or carried it on down the Alleghany as far as Pittsburg, but it swirled in eddies, and the dead and living were borne into recesses of the hills. The thirty

locomotives in the round-house at Conemaugh and elsewhere in the vicinity were tossed about as if they were shells of wood. Some of them were buried almost out of sight, only a wheel showing where they had been plunged into the sand.

Ten Niagaras could not exert more force. The only outlet was under and over the railroad bridge. Horror and heroism here were multiplied. At Bolivar Station, at the lower bridge, which there spans the Conemaugh, a young man with two women was seen coming down on part of a floor. From the bridge a rope was thrown, but at first they failed to reach it, for the swirl of water drove their frail raft into an eddy. As they again whirled out into the rushing stream, he was seen to point to the elder woman, his mother, it is supposed. Quickly he talked to them, evidently instructing them how to catch the rope when next it came within reach. Around in the eddy swung the raft, but gradually nearing flowing water; the brave man stood with his arms about the two women. As they swept under the bridge he reached up and seized the rope. He was jerked violently away from the women, who failed to grasp the life-line. Seeing that they would not be rescued, he dropped the rope and fell back upon the raft, which, caught once more in the changeful current, was washed in toward the bank. The young man caught hold of a branch, and, by great effort, was enabled to help his companions into the tree. He held onto the limb and rested his feet on a pile of driftwood. A mass of floating debris struck his foothold, sweeping it away. He hung then with his body immersed in the water. A pile of drift again accumu-

lated, and he was once more in possession of an insecure foot-rest. Up the river was a sudden crash, another section of the bridge was carried away, the massive stones were hurled like pine chips against that tree, and it, with its living freight, was washed away; the three were drowned before the eyes of the horrified people, helpless to save.

A little girl passed under the bridge just before nightfall. She was kneeling on a small section of flooring, her hands were clasped, her eyes looked up, away, far beyond those whose breaking hearts prompted them to frantic, futile efforts for her rescue; her lips were moving, uttering, in the simple faith of childhood, words of prayer. The strength, will, or means of man were powerless to save, and the little waif, still kneeling, still praying, already viewing, through the thin veil between her eyes and Heaven, the glories of the home beyond, the little child floated swiftly on. She anchored soon, anchored safely, safe in the arms of the Father.

At Bolivar, early in the evening, a woman, with her two children, all clinging to the roof of a coal-house, passed under the bridge. A rope was thrown to her, was within reach of her grasp, but she looked at her little ones, they could not be saved with her; she shook her head; she could not desert her children, and went, with them, to death.

Horrors on horrors could be added to this record, until terrible truth would blunt the sense of belief. Husbands saw wives and children perish before their eyes; children beheld their parents die before them in

a moment of time; wives saw all dear to them on earth swept away in an instant.

Property! Yes! Millions and millions of dollars of property scattered, torn asunder, annihilated, ground into atoms. But what of that! Wealth, property, great or little, is less than nothing here.

Ten thousand human beings, more than ten thousand — women and children making the largest count on this sickening death-roll — perished by flood and fire in those evening hours of May 31st, when the waters of Conemaugh Lake burst through the frail barrier of South Fork Dam.

It was a climax of appalling ruin. It was a maelstrom of desolation, a wilderness of death.

And the black pall of night closed down on that valley amid scenes of agony indescribable, where not a flutter of the wings of peace, not a sign of the protecting hand of Providence seemed visible to the stricken hearts of the multitudes who mourned.

CHAPTER VII.

A SOLDIER-SAILOR'S CRUISE.

AND Leonora was amidst the terrors of the flood, and Colonel Bartine was hurrying on his way to see her once more.

As momentary relief from the long-drawn-out catalogue of misery into which our history has plunged, and in order to introduce a new character, who must take part in the story, and to show what manner of man he was, let us detail, as if told by himself, a chapter from his strange life.

The colonel, soon after he left Pittsburgh, sauntered into the smoking-car of the train. He sat there, enjoying his cigar, and wrapt in moody revery, as to how he should meet the girl he loved, how she would receive him, what they should say one to the other.

He hardly noticed a well-dressed, broad-shouldered, honest-faced man, who moved to the seat behind him, and studied such glimpses as could be caught of his thoughtful face.

At last the man, seeming to shake himself together with a settled determination, lightly placed his hand upon Bartine's shoulder, and at the same time said:

"Excuse me, Colonel Bartine!"

The colonel turned quickly and faced him.

"You don't remember me, colonel. But I know you well, recognized you yesterday in the Grand Army ranks in Pittsburg."

"Your face certainly seems familiar;" said the colonel, pleasantly; "but I cannot recall your name. You see, I know or meet so many people ——"

"But I guess you haven't met many such rips as Jack Adams — used to be color-sergeant of the old Forty-Eighth," was the smiling interruption.

"What! Adams! Why, yes! Bless my soul! I do know you now, and I am really very, very glad to see you!" and the once commander, in most soldierly comradeship, shook hands heartily with the brave fellow who blushed and beamed all over his face in joy and gratified pride.

The seat was turned so that the two could face, and, both being now citizens, they were soon talking as only soldiers of the same command, who have shared

in the same dangers and enjoyed the same glories, can talk.

Putting aside many questions and answers passing between the two, we can let Jack Adams tell his own story, or "yarn" as he would call it, in his own way:

"I was born up in this State," he said, "pretty nigh where Johnstown is now, though it was not much of a place those times. I was always just as reckless and larky as I used to be in the regiment, colonel, where, if it hadn't been for your good nature, I'd been in trouble many a time."

"You were a good, brave soldier, Adams, and if you were a little wild at times, you were but a boy then. A more daring fellow than you never carried the old flag into the front and thick of battle. I remember that, and I am delighted to meet you once more," answered the colonel, enthusiastically.

"Thank you, sir! thank you colonel!" and Jack Adams looked the proudest man on earth.

"Well, sir," he said, resuming his story, "I was born in the old hills below; mother died when I was quite a kid, and my old man, he wanted me to go to school, and I just didn't want to do anything of the kind, and there was trouble, and I got well thrashed, as I deserved, though I didn't know it or believe it then, and I wasn't thirteen years old when I stole my way on freight trains to Philadelphia, and shipped for a sailor.

"Three years of sailor-man life, long before they was out, taught me that life 'board ship wasn't all fun and feeding, by a long shot. I'd just got back from a cruise when the war broke out, and I thought I'd try

so'gerin' a bit, and, as good luck would have it, I enlisted in your regiment. You're good enough to say I did my duty; anyhow you know I got to be color-sergeant, and we both know I never let go my hold on 'old glory,' and was pretty well contented until they wanted men from the army to go into the navy.

"I remember none of you wanted me to go, but I had the restless fit on me, and wouldn't listen to friends or reason, and so you did let me go, and I shipped into the Mississippi squadron. I didn't let on to them, no more than I did to you, how young I was, and I was such a solid chunk of a chap that I rated as able seaman at once.

"I'm bold to say, sir, I did my duty there too, and got a 'good conduct,' 'honorable mention' discharge from the naval service at Brownsville, Texas, in July, '67. My father was dead by that time. I had nothing to call me North, and I thought I'd see how things looked ashore down there, and try a new trade.

"I'm Yankee all through, and to turn an honest penny during my wanderings, I buys a lot of brass watches, cheap breast-pins, and such truck, from a fellow in Brownsville, stows them in my ditty-bag, and starts off on a peddling trip.

"Just as I was footing it out of the town, I meets a darky riding a mighty fine mule.

"'Say, boss,' says he, 'don' yo' wanter buy er mewel?'

"Now, I could no more ride than that coon could reef topsails, but just because I couldn't I wanted to.

"I suspicioned from the first that the darky had stolen that mule, and, when he took a common brass

watch in trade for it, and lit out mighty sudden, I was sure of it. But I climbs aboard, and after a little bit got hang of the steering of the craft, and went sailing along smooth, at about six knots an hour.

"I had real good luck for about a week at peddling, and made my way, tacking to strike the houses as they lay, until I was above Fort McIntosh, and there, one day, toward evening, I lost my bearings, and got off the main road onto some little bridle-path. It came on to rain, and rained as though they were pumping out all the clouds aloft.

"After a bit, up comes two men, riding good horses. I stopped them and asked them where I was, telling them my business, and that I was trying to find a ferry somewhere thereabouts that would take me over the Grande into Coahuila and Nuevo Leon, Mexico, for I thought I could work my brass off for good metal on the señoritas.

"They said the ferry was twelve miles from there.

"Was there no place between, where I could stop all night? I asked.

"There was an old cabin, one of them said, looking sharp at the other, about a mile from where we were. Nobody lived there, but it would give shelter from the rain, and I could sleep on the floor.

"I was terribly shook up with the long ride, so I thanked them and was going on, when the keenest-looking chap of the two says to the other:

"'Ben, it's raining too hard; I guess we'd better go back and put off our trip until to-morrow.'

"'All right, major,' says Ben, 'just as you think best.'

"So they turns their horses about and goes with me. Single file we had to ride; the major going fo'ard; Ben aft, and me 'midships. We hadn't gone far before the major gets off his horse to fix some of the running rigging. I see him make a sign to Ben. I halted, and had just taken out my sheath-knife and a plug of tobacco, to cut a chew, when this major speaks up:

"'My friend!' says he to me; 'you'd better get off that mule, leave that bag of plunder tied onto the saddle and git, if you don't want the top of your head blowed off.'

"I see what the game was; they were land pirates and allowed they'd rob me. Ben, he laughs a big haw-haw! They was so sure of me that they didn't even draw their shooters. I had my own 'navy-six' with me, but it was under my long-tail coat, and I know'd better than to try and draw it.

"I'm a Yankee sailor, and Yankee soldier, too, I am! and I didn't intend to strike my flag without some kind of ruction. I just threw myself flat on the mule's neck, give her the worst sort of a jab with the sharp point of my knife, clasped my arms about her, and drove her slam-bang against the major, who was standing by his horse, across the narrow road. I rammed into 'em hard, knocked the horse sideways, sent the man flying into the brush, slipped the mule past, and away I went. 'Twasn't more than a minute, though, till they both was after me, gaining on me, too, and shooting steady. I wasn't hit, but before the chase went far the mule stumbled, and I shot ten feet over her head. I picked myself up, and saw a house right before me. I rushed into it, all was most pitch dark,

but I slammed the heavy door, and, feeling round, lighted at once upon a big timber leaning against the jam. I'd just braced this against the door when they came up,

"'Come out of that, you mule thief,' yelled the major, 'or we'll burn you up like a rat!'

"I wasn't scared much about fire, there was too much rain, and all was too wet for them to do any burning. The place was terrible dark, it had two little holes for windows, but they were closed up with board shutters. Them fellows fired three shots through the door, but never hit me. I lay close on the dirt floor, and never answered when they taunted me, so as to hear my voice and judge where I was. Directly came a ramming thump on the door; they had a log, and were trying to batter it down. The planking was thick but rotten. I had my pistol out, and, putting my hand on the door, I felt just where the next thump came, then I fired right on a line with it. There was a curse and a yell, and I heard Ben say:

"'The fool has shot me in the hip; help me away; I ain't no good here any more.'

"I went to one of the windows and peeped through a crack, and saw Ben on the ground and the major leaning over him. He was in range, but I had no good chance for aim to kill him, but I fired, and must have hit him in the wrist, for he shook his arm and yelled like a Turk. They didn't bother me any more, but I staid in that cabin all night. Next morning I went out very cautious. Nobody was about, and I started off for the ferry. My mule and bag were gone, but I had a lot of stock in my pockets, and my money was

safe, so I concluded to make for Mexico anyhow. I didn't want to stay in that section and meet any more such gentlemen.

"After a long walk in the mud, but clear overhead, I reached the river and the ferry.

"Two men were sitting there by a log, before them was a fire, and on it a pan of fish were cooking in bacon fat. It was very early, and they were cleaning their pistols, had 'em all apart lying on the log. One of the men was a Texan or Mexican, I could tell by the cut of his jib; t'other was anybody's cut-throat.

"They looked up when they see me, looked at one 'nother and then at me.

"About a hundred yards away was a shanty, half logs, half canvas, and by it I see my mule and two horses tethered and grazing. Then I knew I'd walked outer the frying-pan into the fire. These two fellows was of the same gang, and Ben and that major was both in that hut.

"'Can you ferry me across?' says I. 'I'll pay you well, and I'm in a hurry!'

"'Musta have eat, first,' says one chap. 'You talka Spanish?'

"'No!' says I, 'I can't,' which was a lie. I could talk it some, and I could understand nigh every word of it.

"So these two goes to jabbering Spanish, and I looks about me.

"Down close to the bank, not twenty feet away, was two boats, one in the river, but tied by a rope to a tree, 'tother just pulled up on the bank, the oars in the row-locks. They'd been out fishing in that one.

"They offered me fish and hard-tack, but I couldn't eat. They was busy at their grub, and I just leaned against the log.

"'It's him!' says one.

"'Course it is!' says the other.

"'Shall I go up and tell the boys?' asks the greaser.

"'What for? He's got his money yet, if he had any. We can get it and float him down the river, and share two, instead of three or four.'

"All this was in Spanish lingo, and talked low, but I was taking it all in. The cylinders of their pistols I managed to quietly take in, too, off the log, and slip them into my pockets.

"I had made my plans. All of a sudden I rushed down to the untied boat, and shoved her into the water so hard that I had to swim a stroke or two before I caught her. As I climbed into her in a hurry one oar contrived to unship itself, and floated off. But I saved the other, put it over the stern, and began to scull for my life.

"Them fellows just howled when they saw me go; They rushed for the tied-up boat, took two pair of oars from the bank, and were after me in no time. I did my level best, but I was kind of weak and sick for want of sleep and food. There were two of them, and they gained on me fast. I knew they had no shooting irons, and I was just holding mine ready, they being within twenty foot of me. The greaser dropped his oars, and stood up ready to grapple my boat, I thought.

"It had commenced to rain again, most terribly. A

great, black cloud had come into the sky, right overhead of us, about the time the rain began, and it kept growing blacker and blacker all the time.

"I see Mr. Greaser twirl something aloft, for a second or two, and then, swish! it came at me, over my head — not round my neck, by good luck, but down about my arms it went, and was drawn all taut in an instant, and I was helpless. He had lassoed me.

"I about give in then. I could feel him drawing in slack to pull us close together. In less than half a minute I'd feel his knife in my throat — my pistol had dropped out of my reach, even if I could a used it.

"Just then something seemed to drive my head down into my shoulders, and I dropped like a log, as luck would have it, fair into the bottom of the boat, without upsetting it.

"I must have laid insensible for two or three hours. When I come to, the sun was high and all was clear sky. The rope was still about me, and there was a big strain on it. I moved my body until I had a little slack in, and it didn't take me long to get free, then I pulled on the rope and drew up to the water-logged boat of the thieves; the other end of the lasso had been fastened to one of its seats.

"In that boat, stripped of nearly all clothing, with a great, black streak down his head and body, the earring melted out of one ear, was the carcass of the greaser. I see something hang to one row-lock of the boat, and looked, and there was the other fellow, doubled up, head downward in the water, just as he had pitched forward, and just as the row-lock had caught and held a turn in the sash he wore about his

waist; dead'r than a salt mackerel he was, and had been for long as t'other. You know how storms come up, down there, colonel, and how they do everlastingly rattle things for a short while. Well, sir; it was one of them sudden storms, and a thunderbolt and streak of lightning, shot in just at the right time, and hitting the right spot, and fellows, that saved me then. I pulled ashore and made tracks away from that latitude.

"I struck for Mexico, worked my way down that side to Matamoras, crossed to Brownsville, and hurried up North, pretty well cured of restlessness. Old Johnstown seemed to be good enough and safe enough for me, and I couldn't depend on another stroke of lightning coming to save me if I ran into another such a scrape.

"I've been there ever since, doing right well at the iron-works, and got to considering myself such a steady fellow that I'm going to be married this month. Just went to Pittsburg for Memorial Day, to see some of the old comrades there; and there I saw you, colonel, the best of them all.

"Well, Adams!" said Colonel Bartine, who had been an interested listener to this story: "You have certainly, as man and boy, soldier, sailor and rover generally, had your share of dangers and adventures, and I suppose nothing but salvation from violent death by a providential stroke of lightning would have made a steady, stay-at-home citizen of you, and so that means of conversion was provided. I hope it will prove a permanent cure."

"Oh! I'll have a sheet-anchor by this time next

month, colonel, and it — she, I mean, will hold me safe in port for the rest of my days," answered Jack.

"Yes, stay at home when you make one, my man. Live here, away from trouble and harm, and die in your bed like a good Christian. Come to Hotel Hurlbut and see me, Adams; I am going to stay in Johnstown for a week. We must be near there now, and I will have to go for my sachel. Glad to have met you — don't forget to come and see me."

"Thank you, colonel; I'll be sure to come," and Colonel Bartine passed on into the vestibule car.

A few minutes more and the train stopped at Sang Hollow.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE DEPTHS.

It was past the noon hour. Leonora sat in her cozy room of the Randolph home, on Walnut street, Johnstown. She was in charge of the house; its mistress and her eldest daughter had, the day before, gone on a visit to friends in Altoona. The youngest child, little Rose, eight years of age, her favorite pupil and most loving adherent, preferred to stay at home with "her Miss Leo." She said, this little maid, that "Miss Leo was better than girls that thought themselves too old for dollies, and weren't big enough to be real young ladies."

Young George also refused to visit with his mother and sister, he was at that age when he "could see no fun in a lot of giggling girls; home and the fellows were good enough for him!" but home, when the

river and the creek were " on the rampage," as at present, saw little of him, except at meal-time. He was a hearty, honest boy, an all-alive boy, brave and true, but a fun-loving boy, and nothing more, as yet.

Captain Randolph went at night to where his wife was visiting, and returned to Johnstown each morning, remaining there during the day, to transact the business of his office.

Maggie Armstrong, the bright-eyed, trim, quick-spoken servant of the household, with just enough of her native land left un-Americanized to give a tinge of the brogue to the pleasant words that came from her mouth, and it was a pretty mouth, too, though rather large — she also was there to perform her regular duties, and she, too, was a sworn friend of Miss Leo.

" As mild a-speakin', and considerate o' others a young lady as ever stepped. An' a born lady every inch of her, a blind pig without a eye could see that; an' a purtier one niver curled ropes, an' ropes of gold hair over a knowledgeable head; an' it's all her own, too, every strap of it; it's the hair I mane, though, for the mather o' that, the heads, her own too, an' it's the best of heads; it is, well fittin' to go wid the diamond-heart of her. God bless her!"

That was Maggie's opinion, emphatically expressed to her devoted lover, the warmth of words being excited by the wonderful offer of Leonora to cut, fit and make the wedding dress which Maggie expected to wear before the month of June was closed. " And there ain't the likes of her for fittin' a dress, or for the finest o' needle-workin', nor for the illigant taste in thrimmin',

not in Philadelfy, ner Noo Yark, ner Paris aither: it's jist ma-rac-a-lis, the stitchin' them fingers o'hern can do. An' its nar' a gurrl that's ever been married in Johnstown'll be nater dressed for her weddin' than yer own'll be, moind that, Jack!"

And Jack Adams, for Jack Adams it was on whom Maggie expended her eloquence; answered and assured her of his full belief in all she said, in such a manner as a soldier-sailor-lover should reply to his sweetheart, soon to be his bride. Leo, let us call her by the abbreviation, those who loved her gave her name — Leo was alone, little Rose was with Maggie, helping, she thought, in after-dinner clearing-up. Young George had hurried his meal, and hastened out of doors again for sport dear to his boy's soul.

Very unquiet were the thoughts, heavy the heart of Leo, as she sat, reading for the twentieth time a portion of the last of the infrequent letters from her stepmother. With exception of a short paragraph, the epistle was, in tenor, precisely almost, a literal reproduction of all others received from the same source. A few words of thanks, hardly *thanks*, better say of acknowledgment for the money forwarded, half her quarter's salary, by Leo to the grasping ones who had no claim upon her. Many lines of groaning and wishing, in connection with the poverty—"destitution," the second Mrs. S. called it — under which she "and her poor daughters suffered," and a coldly expressed desire for Leo's health and welfare. That was all, except these lines, lines possessing painful but irresistible, fascination for the lonely girl to whom they were written. She knew them by heart, could repeat them word by

word, and yet again and again she would read them from the page.

"Colonel Bartine was in the city for a week. He called here several times, and I really think he was very much attracted to Sarah. He took her riding once, to a concert and to the theater; rather conspicuous attentions, I think, for a man like him to a handsome girl like Sarah — for she is looking remarkably well now, and did her best to please him. She thinks him just too lovely for anything. I only hope it may turn out as she and I desire. Kate is horribly mad at him for not inviting her, but I tell her they can't both marry the man, or he can't marry both, unless he turns Mormon — then he might take the whole family — even you."

Disgust and anger rose high in Leo each time she read those silly, unwomanly, immodest words, and she blushed to think of her connection with one who could write them, to think that this woman had been her father's wife — had taken the place of her revered mother. "Just too lovely for anything," that was an expression like, and worthy of, Sarah, a showy girl, handsome in a bold way, without stability of character or brains. And the reference to Colonel Bartine "turning Mormon, and taking the whole family — *even you.*" It made her turn hot with a rage she never knew before. She blushed for herself, to think such words could be written to, and of, her — and of him, "her hero, her knightly soldier — her Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche.*"

Blame of him could not enter her mind, a disloyal drop of blood to him coursed not through her veins;

but a sense of wonderment came over her — how could a man, such a *man*, be attracted by flashy, bogus-gilt, base metal of Sarah, whom she knew so thoroughly, and in whom, spite of all the overflowing charity of her nature, she could see no genuine traits.

Then came self-accusation once more to the pure soul, and she berated herself again for selfishness, and grew scarlet of face as some inward monitor told her that she envied her sister; and she tried to deny her involuntary violation of the tenth commandment, tried to tell herself that she *did not covet*, and tears were the only answer. She made excuses for *him*, she recalled how many great men, statesmen, philosophers, men whom the world honored, had married frivolous, brainless wives, had been won by just such petty arts and attentions as her step-sister possessed and practiced, and she excused him, and thought that, perhaps, if she had given more evidence of partiality, desire for his company, had evinced more decided pleasure in his companionship, had *sought* him more — his liking, she knew he had once liked her — would have grown into — into — she would not even think what.

But, no! and the revulsion came quickly. No! a thousand times no! Not to win even one smile, not for a lifetime of happiness, would she, could she, thus violate the nature born within her. She would die first; she would die were she to attempt it. Modesty, the true modesty, the God-given shield for woman's protection, was to her the pulse of life.

But, oh, to see him, to see him once more!

Tears came, easing, through her eyes, the burden on her heart. She looked out from the window; could

see, not far below, flooded streets, houses in which water had taken possession of the lower floors, and thought pity of the people thus incommoded.

Little Rose came into the room: "Maggie and I have cleared all off and cleaned all up," she said, "and Maggie says she is going out. She's crazy, ain't she, Miss Leo?"

The smiling face of the Irish girl appeared in the doorway.

"See, miss, it's terrible lonesome here wid all o' 'em away, an' never a sthroke of work nor nothin' to do. If ye don't mind I'll take a run out and see what's doin' of all the freshet and the likes. I'll be back plenty time afore tea. D'ye care if I do, now?"

"I have no objections, certainly, Maggie," answered Leo; "but it is so wet, and so muddy, and the water so high and backing up, and rising everywhere all the time. I know *I'm* very glad to stay in the house."

"Ain't she crazy, going out such a day as this? I told her she was crazy," persisted little Rose.

"Och! I'm naither sugar nor salt that a bit of wather'll melt me. I like to see the fun an' oxcitemint. An' as to crazy, ye wee Rosy, mebbe ye'll be crazy yerself one of these days."

"Oh! I know!" shouted the little one, with that supernatural wisdom and insight given some children; "I know! She wants to meet Jack! I remember, Jack went to Pittsburg and is coming back to-day. I remember now — she told me herself — Jack is her beau, you know, and she's going to meet him, Miss Leo, and ——"

"Hush! hush! Rose, dear; you forget yourself," said

the governess, and, looking up, she saw by the crimson face of Maggie, that the shot of Rose had been a true one.

"Go, Maggie!" she said; "you need not hurry back, if you are not here, I can get the tea."

"God bless you, miss! It's you has the good heart!" and the happy girl hurried away.

Leo endeavored to engage her mind upon the dainty work her hands took up; the prattle of the child was a relief to her. But the little one soon tired of talk and solitary play. She clambered upon the bed, and begged that the governess would come beside her and sing her to sleep; this Leo willingly consented to do, and the reaction upon herself, after her late mental tumult, was such that the soft lullaby closed in slumber her eyes also.

A picture they made, of innocence and peace, of love and protecting care, unconscious of all outside the world of dreams.

They heed no uproar in the streets, no fast galloping horses, no cries of warning, no mocking jeers.

Rude was their awaking! Were they awake? Was it not some awful dream, some terrible nightmare?

Could there be an earthquake? An earthquake! here in Johnstown!

An instant, only an instant, to collect the senses so rudely roused to life and action.

The child's arms were about her neck, tightly grasped, the blue eyes, dilated unnaturally, were looking frightened questions into her own; the pale lips of the little face vainly tried to utter words that would not fall from the terror-paralyzed tongue.

The shock, the striking of the house as if by a force of millions of tons of rushing power, had roused the sleepers; they realized that some fearful peril was at hand; what, they know not, but that an irresistible horror was upon them, they felt.

The house, the whole building, rose upright in the air; up, up, and up, it went; as though tossed in play by a giant, then it whirled and rocked, would be brought for a moment to a standstill, then thumped and battered, and raised up and shot forward, as if 'twere the sport of drunken demons.

A sound, terrible in its strangeness, of rushing, mighty waters, outside, all around, under the flooring of the room in which this girl and infant knelt clasped in each other's arms, that sound told its story even to those ears that never heard or dreamed of it before.

The house was moving at terrific speed! How? Where? As the building rocked and swayed, the wonder-stricken eyes of those inside caught glimpses of great trees, of houses and portions of houses, of rocks, of railroad cars, pianos, cradles, horses and wagons, and, could it be? Yes! human beings, men and women, and children, alone, together, by twos and threes, and groups of more; all clutching and clawing and grasping roofs; and crouching on floors, and clinging to timbers, to anything that would float and sustain them.

And the eyes, the faces of these, the terror, the hopeless agony, the helpless, pitiful misery that seemed to instinctively abandon all thought of all hope of help from God or man. The sight of these awful distortions of humanity could never come in dreams,

no nightmare could ever conjure up such combined, unimaginable horrors. All this must be *real!*

What it was she knew not, whence it came, she could not think. But danger, deadly danger, death, was there, she knew.

A soldier she! though a woman. Well was she named Leo! This little child, wee Rose, was in her care, was trusted to her, was hers to save.

And by God's help she'd do it, let the danger be what it might.

Less time than it has taken to describe her sensations since her waking, it took to rouse her to action.

To stand in that swaying, tottering, rocking house was impossible. She must get command of herself and her charge, and await events.

"Rose, dear," she whispered, putting her face close to the blanched cheek of the little one, "Rose, dear, loosen your arms a little from my neck. Hold me tight, dear, and I will hold you, and never let you go."

"I don't know what is the matter; something terrible. But we must be brave, Rose, and not cry or get wild, so we don't know what we are doing. You will be brave, won't you, my darling?" and the little one nodded her head "yes;" she could not speak.

Still the terrible swirl, and totter and toss, and battering on every side and underneath, and the rushing, swish and roar of waters, and the doubly terrible panorama of death and destruction, of pandemonium in a whirlwind, of the Great Last Day of Earth, the dissolution of all things — still it went on, and on, passing before her eyes.

She tore all the heavy covering from off the bed; it was a good, strong frame, the bed, well put together. Strips she made of the sheets, and, well as she could, on the unsteady structure, she made fast the little one to herself, and both to the bed frame-work; the mattress she left upon it. She tied herself fast to the headboard, the little girl knelt beside and balanced and leaned against her.

"Pray, Rose, pray to God for all of us. Pray *hard!*" she whispered.

"Are — are we going to die?" faltered the child, for the first time giving utterance to her thoughts

"As God wills, dear; pray to be saved."

"Oh! papa, brother, mother, Nelly! Oh! Miss Leo!" again came words from the child; thoughts of those she loved.

Did it take an hour for all this to happen? It may have seemed so, may have seemed a day; it was all over in a space of time so short as to be incomputable.

"Papa's safe, nothing can hurt him," she said again. Oh! the faith of a child in a good father and his strength. Then, again: "If papa was only here." In her eyes "papa" was omnipotent.

"Pray for all, Rosie. Don't get frightened and hold to me close!" Leo said.

A crash, a crush, a wild pitch forward, a resisting stumble, as it were, a grinding together, an uplifting of the floor, a parting of walls, a crumbling away of all surroundings.

A rush, a mighty rush of filthy water, bearing *debris* of every imaginable form and shape, and two distorted bodies of drowned men, burst into, past, through that

room where these pure creatures awaited what might come to them and—

They, on their strange craft, were afloat, aswirl in the merciless torrent, in a watery inferno, going, rushing, rushing—where?

"Pray, Rosie, pray, and God will care for us, or take us, as is best."

And Leo, brave Leo, nerved for the worst, to fight to the last, this little child her only care, went rushing on—where?

CHAPTER IX.

A NIGHT WITHOUT A STAR.

CAN words of man, can pen of hand, can pencil of artist, can imagination, conceive or depict the horrors of that night in May, when Pandora's accursed casket, replenished with all ancient and every new-found curse and ill, seemed emptied upon Conemaugh Valley, and even Hope was not left there?

With one great swoop, over three thousand houses of brick and wood—hotels, stores, dwellings, factories—were all sent crashing, tumbling, tossing, never floating, down the roaring torrent.

The seething mass, engulfing ten thousand human creatures, hurled itself against the massive arches of the great stone bridge. Above the roar of the flood, the crash of falling timbers, the tons on tons of masonry and iron, and every conceivable bulk, and the swirl of mad waters, were heard the groans of the dying, the wails of the mangled, the agonizing cries

"Pray, Rosie, God will care for us."

for help, from strong men, fainting women and helpless children.

Telegraph wires, broken and tangled, the railroad bed for miles washed out and swept away, cars, locomotives, the heaviest of transportation conveyances of all kinds, swallowed up in the waste of waters — nothing left but desolation supreme.

Poor, struggling creatures, who had by desperate efforts, or some miracle of chance, survived the perils of the flood, who had escaped being ground to death in the wreckage, were able, by seizing some overhanging branch of tree or brush, or by superhuman exertion, to reach firm land once more. Weak, helpless, and crippled, half perished with cold, and heart-broken, the courage beaten, washed, ground out of them, these exhausted remains of humanity found no one able to extend them hospitality, to dress their wounds, or even to give them food and shelter.

Destruction was universal. It is not surprising that in that awful moment many gave up every effort for self-preservation, and committed their bodies to the deep, and their souls to the Maker.

The force of the flood was such that it ground the wreckage into a solid, compact mass, extending from the very bottom of the river and many feet above the top of the bridge itself. In this heterogeneous impact were houses and parts of houses, fences, furniture, machinery, wagons, cattle, the dead and the dying, so fixed that upon it was supported the enormous weight of a locomotive without sinking.

In this awful chaos were thousands of *living* creatures. The groans and bewailings of the helpless and

dying drove away, with bursting hearts, those who, powerless to save or aid, ventured near the accursed spot. But this was not enough to glut the fiends who presided over the agony. Fire must be added to hurry on the carnival of death. The stifling and scorching heat, snaky, red, licking, all-devouring flames crept in and out, and rose above the scene of disaster, to add terror to terror. It was a struggle between the two loosened devils — fire and water, the waters and the fire — for possession, for supremacy over the bodies of the engulfed. The cries of the victims, many of them from beneath the depths of the ruin, and there pinioned in wreckage, all praying for help or death, were heard from amidst the very lickings of the flames.

Do we repeat in telling this story?

The story, the truth of it, the horrors of it, were repeated a thousand, ten thousand times that day and night. A thousand times we might repeat the story, and each repetition would be of an individual experience.

Struggling forms would be often seen amidst that smoking, smoldering mass. Now and again, seldom, one could be reached and dragged forth. Here and there, one or more — alas! how few — writhed their mangled, broken, beaten bodies from the accumulation. If they fell not back exhausted, if they were reached in time to save them, like nearly all who were rescued, they failed to survive the night, and died before day dawned.

Let any mind endeavor to grasp the driving, the carrying, the impacting force of the bulk of water let loose upon Conemaugh Valley by the giving-way of

South Fork Dam. Since the catastrophe the expert correspondent of a newspaper (*The Sanitary Engineer*), sent to investigate, has rendered his report. He estimates that the amount of water held in check by that insufficient barrier, the dam — being three and a half miles in length and one and a quarter miles wide, with a mean depth of thirty feet — gave the enormous volume of one *trillion tons* of water. It is calculated that thirty-three million tons of water pass over the Falls of Niagara every hour, and, according to this estimate, it would require thirty hours for Conemaugh Lake to pour over Niagara's ledge. Yet, those billion tons of murderous torrent plunged into, beat down, tore away, and hurled through the fated valley in three hours.

Strange it is that any live to bear witness to its fury.

Its wondrous freaks, its sparing of single lives among the many perishing, could almost reconcile the most prejudiced to the doctrine of predestination.

Wonderful, if not miraculous, "Providential," were some of the escapes recorded. These are bright spots in the almost universal blackness.

On Iron street was the home of Mr. George J. Lea. When the great wave came swooping down upon them, eight people were crouched upon the roof of that house. Picked up and carried as though it were a straw, was that little house, from its resting place, and driven or floated in many directions it was for half an hour; then it caught and was halted against the bank of drift above the stone bridge. Was it directed there by an All Powerful hand in answer to the prayer of a little

child? Who knows? For in that group there was a little one, not four years old, who, believing as she had been taught, in the all-prevaling power of prayer, unceasingly poured forth her petitions to the Almighty for safe deliverance from their peril. Every one of those eight escaped, over the drift; they know not how they made their way, but they live to tell the tale.

Miss Ida Fanestock, of Pittsburg, was visiting the family of Mr. Boyd, in Johnstown.

The flood came down upon that home, and all whom it had sheltered were carried, tossed by the waters, away on the roof of the house. All these were favored; their raft was floated against the public school building, and the family, with the guest, were able to enter there, and thus find safety.

J. F. Moore, telegraph operator, employed by the Western Union Company, and stationed at Pittsburg. His wife and two children left Johnstown to join him only one hour before the waters deluged that town.

Mr. C. T. Schubert, editor of the Johnstown *Free Press* (German), a man prominent and popular, sent his three sons to Conemaugh Borough, on Thursday, and on Friday afternoon, he, with his six other children and his wife, visited Mr. Gribble's home. The water from the lake flood warned them of swift danger; they fled before it, and in the attic of the house hastily constructed a raft on which all crowded. In safety they floated to the bridge, but, as if poised and driven by an unseen hand, a great piece of timber, raised from the water, swept over the raft, and carried its pilot, the father of that family, to death in sight of them all.

At No. 135 Walnut street, Johnstown, lived Mr. James M. Walters, an attorney. His family, on a roof, drifted away from him, and he was carried, with his dwelling, through streets and alleys to Alma Hall. The ruins of his home struck that building, and Mr. Walters was thrown into his own office. Can fiction furnish any story more strange than this, seemingly more improbable? Yet 'tis true!

Alma Hall, mentioned above, was the theater of strange, sad scenes that Friday night. More than two hundred terror-stricken souls had sought refuge beneath its roof, and swarmed together on the second, third and fourth floors. The men amongst this throng possessed energy and ability, and, afflicted in body and mind as they were, proceeded to bring order out of chaos. After hasty organization, Mr. Walters, so wonderfully cast among them, was made commander, or president of the strangely thrown-together community. The Rev. Mr. Beal was placed in charge of the first habitable floor, Mr. A. M. Hart appointed superintendent of the next floor, and Dr. Matthews held the post of chief in the fourth story. Lights were not permitted, and in the gloom of their strange surroundings, a darkness symbolical of that which shrouded their hearts and was seemingly prophetic of their future, this, the most memorable night of their lives, was passed. The sick were cared for, as well as means at hand, or obtainable, would permit. But there was no salve for the wounded hearts, no balm for the tortured spirits there. To the weaker women and to the children, such accommodations and comforts as the place afforded were given. Those of more rugged frame

and nature waited patiently through the long, long hours, and watched for the daydawn they almost feared to see. The wailing of thirsty, hungry, frightened children, the piteous cries of feeble babes, the gasping sobs of suffering woman — that told of griefs and fears too deep for tears — all these made up a tragedy, a hundred tragedies, beyond the power of pen to portray. But brave men and noble-hearted women were among them, they consoled, and reasoned, and spoke words of hope and cheer. Sleep was a refuge unsought, unthought of. The murmured prayers of supplication or thanksgiving within those walls, ascended to the Throne, mingled with the swish of angry waters and the shrieks of the injured, the groans of the dying in surrounding ruins outside. Two sad women endured the pains and perils of premature childbirth amid the gloomy terrors of this night. Words of praise are insufficient to mark the honor due Dr. Matthews ; with several of his ribs broken by a falling timber, he, ignoring his own sufferings, devoted himself to the sick and injured. From a house across the way from Alma Hall, two women shouted appeals for aid. With two other young men, the doctor clambered over the drift, reached them, and ministered to their wants. The watchful tenderness of those in charge kept death at bay that night, but women and children loosened their grasp on life, and went out to the beyond, on the succeeding day, too weak to sustain the siege of terror, fatigue and want.

One young girl, dashing about in the grasp of the resistless flood, made her voice ring out, high over the horrible din, with the plaintive melody of —

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

And her soul was wafted, with the sacred song upon her lips, to the haven she prayed to find.

Elvie Duncan, daughter of the superintendent of the street-car company, cast away from her family as though a sea divided them, her baby sister as sole companion, kept life aglow in the infant frame by chewing the morsel of bread she had, and feeding it to the little mouth.

The banker, John Dibart, in his splendid home, yielded up his life in the overwhelming tide, and John McKee, a prisoner, was drowned in his cell.

John Fronheiser, a superintendent in the Cambria works, suffered ages of agony in a moment, when his new house fell before the rushing murder, crushing his family in the ruins. As the waters passed, his son cried, piteously: "Don't let me drown, papa; break my arms first!" Then he heard the heart-rending moans of his daughter: "Cut off my legs, papa, but don't let me drown!" and with these, above these, rang into his ears the wild shriek of his wife, already in the torrent: "John, John, save the baby!" Horror! How weak the word. Save! How powerless the arm of man to aid. Mother and babe were swept into eternity. The rest were saved. Captain Gageby and neighbors rescued the children. All through that night she lay, wanting every comfort, beyond reach of all assistance or skilled attendance, in the garret of her wrecked home, this brave little lass of twelve years. In the morning the tender arms of Captain Gageby carried her down-stairs to her father. The face of her

stricken parent excited her to forgetfulness of suffering; she whispered to the friend who held her: "Poor papa; he is so sad." Then, conjuring a smile into her face, to try and cheer the one so terribly bereft, she turned to him, threw from her hands a kiss, and said: "Good morning, papa; don't cry; I'm all right!"

And at that railroad bridge, and the dam that choked and crowded, and packed, and gained its ghastly material, and grew and piled higher and higher, and spread wider and wider, and ever gathered in its voracious maw new victims, and buried them deeper and deeper, and tortured them more and more, and held them still more firmly each moment, and crushed them harder, and ground them bit by bit into indistinguishable, unrecognizable masses; the lurid, licking red flames danced and flickered and flared with infernal activity and devilish glee, lighting up the way to death, horrible death, for the poor humans, hundreds of them, that were drifting into the fiery furnace; while others, heart-broken, exhausted of tears, agonized at their helplessness, blood-curdled, deafened with the ravings, the shrieks, the appeals of men, women and children, looked on.

The flames and the waters exultingly danced in their work of destruction, all through those dark, dark hours, as though to them had been delegated work that Hell itself would shrink from.

CHAPTER X.

TOSSED IN AN OCEAN.

OUT upon the raging sea of destruction plunged Leonora and the little Rose, the lightness, openness and ease with which it would rebound being the cause of salvation of their frail support. The spring hair mattress clung to the bed, and the hasty bindings Leo had made, held fast. Thus far they were favored.

But whither were they going? Where would fate and the flood cast them?

The little girl absorbed almost her entire attention, received each moment assurance of her care. But still her eyes would see, her ears would hear. Tossed and whirled as they were; driven, now here, now there; for an instant at a standstill in an eddy, then driven to one side by contact with some great mass, or part of a building; again, a wave, from behind a wave, would leap upon and bury them, or it would curl and dive and catch up their float and carry them high, and, curving once more, cant them down upon the breast of the flood. Sometimes they went forward with a rush, then a tremble, a swirl, a dozen twists and turns as if upon a pivot, and they were going in an opposite direction as if in tow of a sea-monster. Again and again all these changes happened.

How often? "A thousand, a million times!" she would have said.

How long was it? "How long! a day, a month, a year—an eternity!" would have been her answer

Who could judge of numbers, who keep track of minutes, or hours, or years, in such a judgment day extremity as this?

She was already familiar, saw nothing strange in the tearing mass and jumble of every conceivable kind of building; and portions of buildings and property as varied in its nature as though the town and country had been emptied, by inversion of the houses; and cattle, and fowls, and iron and heavy bodies that experience and books had taught her could not float, she saw. Experience and books were wrong! Why should she only now find it out? She could see machines of solid metal, great iron braces of bridges, and railroad rails, and all such "sinking" things, go whizzing past her, playing, dancing, spinning round and round, and tossing upon the waters as though they were great strips and tangles, and structures of cork-wood.

Her eyes grew familiar with all this very soon, there was so much, so very much of it. It was unending, never the same, yet always like. She had been seeing it all, listening to the roar and crash, having her nostrils and her mouth filled with the sickening, suffocating, earthy, watery, yellowish, green-scummish effluvium and taste of every rank, malarial poison that ever choked the lungs and killed life's blood.

She had been looking at nothing else, breathing and tasting nothing but those poisons for a year — for a lifetime!

But the terrible faces, the shrinking, crouching forms; the frantic, shrieking women; the yelling, cursing, praying men; the passive, unresisting children and

infants, the perishing human beings that swept and plunged past her, with features distorted in every rage and fear and insanity — clinging to trees and planks and masses of everything, grasping and clawing, whirling about without support; great staring eyes, long arms and lengthening fingers springing from out the water to tear her from her float, to tear it to pieces to sustain themselves. These were sights she could not learn to witness unmoved; this was the nightmare of her soul that held her in its vice-like grasp and torture.

She would shut her eyes and keep the horror hidden from view for hours, so it seemed to her, and, when she looked again, the terror was still there, ever there. Would it ever, never cease?

Was this the Great Trial Day, the End of the World? she wondered.

It might be! It *must* be! What else could it be?

Well! If God was good and kind, and would forgive her sins — she had tried to do right, indeed she had. God knew she had tried hard to be good, even if she had often failed in her duty. If God would take her to His home, these awful sights would trouble her no more. She would meet "father" there. She knew that "father" was there, for he had been a good man, a loving, tender, fond and true father; and he was with God, and she was willing to go, and glad to go to him. Her life had not been very happy since he went, she was tired, and he would welcome her, and love her as he used to do here on earth, and she would be happy once again.

And "her hero," he would be there too, her friend as he used to be. She knew that he was not afraid,

even, in the tumult of this Last Day. Perhaps he was in Heaven now, already, while she was passing through this purgatorial hell in expiation of her sins. She was willing, very willing, to suffer years more of these terrors to meet him. She knew that, when her time of penance was through, when she had passed through this stream and torrent and cataract of boiling floods from the gulf of hell, and, sailing on, reached stiller waters, and, floating further yet, came to the bright, silvery shore — she knew that he would be there, with father, to take up her weary, worn soul, and comfort and sustain her, and give her peace and strength, and the love for which she longed.

All this was not the frenzied ecstacy of delirium; it was all in keeping with the complex nature of this noble girl. She was practical as the most stolid of her countrymen; she was poetical as Goethe; she was brave as Brunhilda; she was tender and true as Ruth. Why should she not think of "her hero" now? He had filled her heart and thoughts in life; why should not her thoughts and heart and hopes go out to him, now that she was surging on to death?

But dreams and prayers and fears and dread anticipation never swerved her from active duty; they came and passed away like lightning flashes over her mental vision.

The little Rose was in her arms, was clinging to her; and, dreams apart, Leo fully realized her situation and her responsibility to herself and charge.

The little child was quiet; her lips moved in constant prayer; her widely dilated eyes only told of the terror that froze her blood; the little face, an hour since

so round and bright, flushed with the bloom of youth and health and joyousness, had grown wan and ashen, prematurely old.

When Leo would press her lips to the shrunken cheek, the little one would whisper: "Where is papa? Oh! if papa would only come!"

If papa would only come! She *knew* he could help them. He could do *anything*. God, she had been taught, was all-powerful, was above all. God she had only been told of, only read of; but papa! she knew, and he was strong, a great, strong man, and loved his little Rose, and could easy help and save his little girl and Miss Leo. "Oh! if papa would only come!" And her arms clasped closer about brave Leo, and she closed her eyes again, and no tears she shed, and she waited and trusted in papa, and Leo, and God.

Minute was added to minute, year to year, as onward, backward, here, there, everywhere, they surged and tossed; now in sight of safety, now shut out from every view that promised hope of salvation.

Two unresisting, powerless straws in an ocean of destruction.

CHAPTER XI.

FIGHTING THE MIGHTY WATERS.

COLONEL BARTINE had passed from the smoking-car into the Pullman, in which he had left his sachel.

He had noted the submerged condition of the country through which they had passed when nearing his destination. While listening to the story of Adams,

both he and the sergeant had kept their eyes upon the waters and evidences of an unusual flood that were to be seen through the windows of the train. It is more than probable that this panoramic view recalled to the soldier-sailor the past experiences he gave the colonel, and prompted their narration at the time.

The train had left Pittsburg, for Johnstown, in the morning. It was due at Sang Hollow at two minutes past four o'clock, but was five minutes late.

Bartine was worried, he could hardly assign a reason for his unusual disquietude. He recalled the condition of South Fork dam, and remembered how strongly he had expressed himself in regard to its instability. But he had heard nothing from Captain Randolph concerning it or action on his letter of warning; absence and many other affairs of vast importance to his business associates and himself had, in a great measure, dulled the keen interest he felt in the matter, and gave utterance to while in Johnstown before. Besides, he argued, the people surely could not be so blind, so neglectful of the necessary precautions for preservation of their life and property as to allow that pile of shale and mud and shackling stones to stand between them and sure destruction without most materially, most thoroughly adding to its strength and power of resistance. Nor could it be possible, he said to himself, that those who leased or controlled Conemaugh Lake would carelessly risk the chance of that havoc which must inevitably result from sudden outburst of the waters, and he conjured up the consoling idea that he was "nervous," was "getting full of fancies in his old age."

"But," he mused, as he took his seat, with his sachel beside him, thinking that the few miles between him and Leo would soon be covered, and the few hours before he met her would soon pass: "But, if they have many more rains than this, or if this pour-down and pour-in from the mountains keeps on, no dam that engineers can build will hold back that water in the lake; I'll stake my reputation on that."

The muddy waters of the overflowing river, with all the rubbish they could gather, went rushing by, beneath his eyes.

The train started, had not time to gain half speed, or travel half its length, then stopped.

Jack Adams threw himself into the car, two great steps brought him, erect, looking six inches taller than his length, every nerve of face and body set firm as iron with stern determination, no excitement, but just a tinge of that tingling joy that danger present and to combat gives a man who is a "born fighter."

With a quick gesture his hand went to the visor of the military cap he wore as part of his Grand Army uniform. He did not know that he made the salute. He was once again, every drop of blood in him, every atom of his being — he was once again Sergeant Jack Adams, reporting to his colonel, ready for any duty, for anything, for everything, keen for it, aching for it. He stood there, an American soldier.

Colonel Bartine gave one glance at him; the soldier nature, instinct, heart, possessed, pervaded him at once. He, too — his soul was again "in harness." No word or thought could imbue him now, save that he was "on duty" and "in comm[illegible]."

"Sergeant! what?" Two quick, sharp words, two only. But they meant much, and they reached ready ears and active brain.

"Hell's to pay, colonel. The dam's broke, and I know it. It'll be on us in a second!"

Cool, snappy, like pistol-shots, that answer; the hand went again to the visor, and Sergeant Adams stood immovable, "waiting orders."

The train was rushing backward, the engineer had spied, from his lookout, sufficient to warn him that his life, and the lives of those intrusted to him, depended on the celerity of his action and the speed of his engine. He held the rear-guard that was to face advancing death. The men who hold and drive the iron-horse will own no motto, follow no rule, but "Duty to the Death!" Cowardice, desertion — such words are blotted out of their vocabulary. Craven-hearts there are none amidst the hosts of heroes of the rail. The engine was reversed, and the train thundered back to the hills.

Adams, with the impatience of his kind, had been looking out of the window of the smoking-car; he had seen *something;* intuition, not reason or mental argument, told him what that "something" was, what it meant. Had he been alone, he would have acted for himself, have taken command of himself. But his colonel was there, close at hand, and the soldier-spirit, the sailor-training, the habits of subordination and discipline, took him, all unpremeditatedly, to his superior officer to "report."

The mighty waters were upon them, but not over them. A mad, raging, yell- sea, in which mount-

ains, and forests, and towns, and the component parts that make up each and all these, seemed to be dissolving and grinding, and, in the whirlpools and torrents, struggling and shrieking, the inhabitants of the mountains and towns. This sea was around there, and sweeping, plunging past.

Bartine's face set hard, his steel-gray eyes flashed; with no seeming hurry, but, quick as a flash, he was up. No tremor of muscle or change of voice betrayed that his pulse had quickened by a single beat. Unwittingly he buttoned his coat, carefully, every button, across his breast, as if he were preparing his uniform to lead men in battle. His voice had the ring in it that Jack Adams and "the boys" knew "meant fight," and they loved to hear it.

"Come out on the platform, sergeant!"

The hand answered with a salute, and Jack followed his chief.

"Take care of any women or children, or men, that throw themselves from the cars!" was the order when the two reached the open.

Another salute in reply.

Then their eyes looked over the boiling destruction, waiting the moment for intelligent action. Cool, fearless for self, intent now on saving life, as often before they watched, in time of war, for opportunity to kill, these two soldiers stood, unobserved among the many there.

What they saw, let Mr. C. W. Linthicum, of Baltimore, a passenger on the same train, tell. He says: "It was an awful sight. The immense volume of water was roaring along, whirling over high rocks, dashing

against the banks and leaping high into the air, and this seething flood was strewn with timber, trunks of trees, parts of houses, and hundreds of human beings, cattle and almost every living animal.

" The fearful peril of the living was not more awful than the horrors of hundreds of distorted, bleeding corpses whirling along the avalanche of death. We counted one hundred and seven people floating by, and dead without number. A section of roof came by on which was sitting a woman and a girl. A man named C. W. Heppenstall, of Pittsburg, waded and swam to the roof. He brought the girl in first, and then the woman. They told us they were not relatives. The woman had lost her husband and four children, and the girl her father and mother, and all belonging to her. A little boy came by with his mother. Both were as calm as could be, and the boy was apparently trying to comfort the mother. They passed unheeding our proffered help, and, striking the bridge below, went down into the vortex like lead.

" One beautiful girl came by with her hands raised in prayer, and, although we shouted to her and ran along the bank, she paid no attention. We could have saved her if she had caught the rope. We had taken the bell cord of the train, and with it saved seven people. One old man and his wife, whom we saved, said that eleven persons started from Cambria City on the roof with them, but all the others had, one by one, dropped off."

This is repetition again. So let it be! We *must* repeat and repeat, in this terrible story of horrors, a thousand times repeated.

Every man on that train worked "like a man," and did his best to save. Each was too busy in a noble task, too engrossed by labors he took upon himself and the misery before him, to note his neighbors' deeds.

Colonel Bartine was, as ever, self-possessed, and seizing every opportunity to save.

Sergeant Adams was desperate in his despair at being unable to beat back the murderous torrent, and to save all.

"Steady, man, steady! Don't throw your life uselessly away," said the colonel, in his calm voice, as he saw Jack preparing for a plunge that meant certain annihilation.

"I can't stand it, colonel! I can't stand it!" answered Adams, the great tears rolling down his cheeks. "It's worse, it's ten million times worse than Fair Oaks and Gettysburg together. The Rebs fought us fair and hard, this is foul fighting!"

"And Maggie! Poor Maggie! She's there too!" he said, under his breath, but not so low but that the Colonel heard him.

"And where is Leo!" was the question that anguish asked his soldier-heart.

But he made no sign of the agony that tore him.

He was watching and waiting, as he had watched and waited on many a bloody field, until the moment came when his keen glance should see, his wise brain recognize, that *now* was the time to strike.

The deadly current rushed on. While yet it seemed madness for human power to attempt to stem the rush-

ing tide, to measure strength with that giant force, he said :

" Sergeant ! see those two telegraph poles coming down; there; see? They will be carried near this bank by the eddy; wires are hanging to them yet; two or three strong strokes will bring us to them. Will you try it ? "

" I'm ready, sir ! "

And he was, brave Jack! Ready for anything but remaining in safety while danger was within his reach. No man could propose to Jack Adams an honest deed of daring he was not ready for.

" I'm ready, sir! "

" Then, come! "

Coats off, bare-headed, bare-footed; every wise precaution taken; the chief knowing full well what he proposed to do, the sergeant confident that his leader would do the best thing in the best way; both resolved to do or die.

A plunge, a terrible struggle, a realization then of the demoniac power against which they struggled, a straining of every nerve and muscle, a resolve that " they would do it."

They had seized the plunging poles; the long shafts of timber pitched and rolled; the yards and yards of wires, as the tops, with their cross-pieces upon them, rose out of the waters, these wires whipped, and snaked, and curled, and cut through the air with lashings horrible to look upon, deadly to fall beneath.

An instant for breath, to gain command of voice. The two poles clung together.

" Sergeant, when the cross-pieces plunge under,

work your way up there on your pole, as I will on mine, and grasp a wire, two, if you can, before they rise in the air again."

"Aye, aye! sir!" Jack Adams was afloat, and the sailor took the place of the soldier.

Fortune carried the timbers into a comparatively quiet current, and the wires were secured.

"Now lay over the poles; you lash mine with your wire, and I'll do the same with yours, and bind on down toward the other end."

"Lash and bind it is sir!" answered Sailor Jack, cheerily. He was working now, fighting, doing, "something to help," and he was almost happy.

They worked as though endowed with the strength and endurance of a hundred men. They knew not that their hands were cut and bleeding, that the clothing they had retained was being torn from their bodies, that they were bruised and battered and slashed with bulks and sharp fragments and great masses, and the waters that pounded upon them like an iron flail, and threshed the hair from off their heads, and scourged great patches of flesh from their bodies and limbs.

They knew it not; they felt it not. Little they cared for mere bodily hurt or ill. The *man* in them was aroused; they were fighting — fighting such a battle as neither had ever before dreamed of.

And they held their own against the mighty odds, they lashed and tangled and twisted the wires about the two poles until it seemed impossible to part them. Then they stopped and panted, and took breath for a moment.

They had a raft.

Adams threw himself across it, grasped a long, stout board that was sweeping past, and hauled it in. He had a rudder. He fixed it in the cleft of the two poles. The rush of waters was not so fierce now, but it carried them fast, not far in any one direction, but around, controlled by the ever-changing current.

What next?

CHAPTER XII.

FOUND AND LOST.

JUST before reaching Sang Hollow, three miles west of Johnstown, the end of the mail line on the Pennsylvania Railroad, is the "S. O." signal tower. There were men there, brave men, daring to do all man might do to aid their fellow-men. The sights their eyes were forced to see are burned into their hearts so long as they throb with life.

A young girl, poised upon a portion of roofing, came down the waters; as she neared the tower, a current drove her toward it. Earnestly she begged for help from those who looked out upon her efforts. One strong, stout-hearted man plunged into the river as far as he could and yet resist the sweeping tide. He shouted to her to guide the raft to shore with a bit of board. Nobly she struggled to obey. With strength of desperation she strained every nerve; two or three bold strokes, and it seemed as though she would win the goal; the course of her float changed to the proper direction; she stopped its ownward way for an instant, then it swerved, a wave swept beneath it, its one side raised, and it went out from under her. She tried to

swim — she evidently knew something of the art — but it was a woman against Niagara's flow ; the filthy flood embraced her, beat her, suffocated and crushed the life from out her. Some ponderous wreckage struck her battered form ; a few seconds and she lay a corpse, with face pallid and lifeless, and was hurried away in the torrent.

Here it was that the railroad tracks were torn out and washed away for three-quarters of a mile. The heavy steel rails were tangled as though they were lightest copper wires ; some were broken off as one would snap in two a slender wooden rod. One track was swept into the river. The rails and ties of the east track were thrown on top of the west-bound track, and in one place they were twisted into a plait. The stone ballast was washed from between the ties for over a mile, and in one place the rails, ties, and ballast were all swept away, and the heavy clay roadbed was beaten down hard as a cemented floor by the force of the current sweeping over it.

Near this place Engineer De Lozier rescued four women and one man. One of these was a lady, apparently eighty years of age. That night, again, he aided in saving twelve persons from off floating drift. He saw the drowning of a father, mother and three daughters. They came down on a roof, and just opposite the town their raft struck a pile and went to pieces. All disappeared in the flood. A moment after two heads were seen above the water, and hands came out clutching at the roof. Men and women, with arms broken, blood streaming over their faces,

and their bodies cut, bruised and bleeding, passed before him continually.

The people of the town (Sang Hollow) worked heroically, men and women, to save the unfortunates. Alas! how little could they do. They saw two tiny children, neither more than three years of age, clasped in each other's arms, swallowed up in the gulf, and following them went a lone woman in the attitude of prayer.

Men and women in dozens, in pairs and single; children, boys, girls, big and little, and wee babies, were there among the awful confusion of water, drowning, gasping, struggling and fighting for life.

The colonel and the sergeant, with every sense on the alert, guided their raft everywhere. They saved and counted not, they worked not like men, like gods. Grasping one here, tearing another from out the very jaws of death, snatching still one more who was ready to resign life, they loaded their raft, forced it to obey their will, and carried their human cargo to the land.

But they! there was no land to stay their feet. They spurned safe earth while souls and bodies were to be rescued, and the demon water was there to fight. Back again into the torrent, they compelled their raft to go. There was no commission, no rank, no commendation from earthly powers to be gained in this fight; but never did these two men struggle more heroically.

Down past the "S. O." signal tower, down past the shouting, willing, but powerless throng on the banks at Sang Hollow, clinging, crouching on a mattress, swept a girl with golden hair; close in her arms she

held a child. Their faces were pressed together; the little one was praying, the elder was whispering to her words of comfort and of hope that found no response in her own heart.

Once a rope reached the elder, fell across her float. She seized it for a moment, she looked from whence it came. Danger or fright could not shake her power of judgment, could not change the thoughtful tenor of her nature.

She looked to the spot from whence that thread of safety had been thrown. A glance!

Yes; there was safety and life for her; but the same glance told the dreadful truth that *two* could not be saved, she could never support her precious charge and reach that shore alive. She could save herself, but, if both ventured, both most assuredly must perish.

The child, unconscious, indifferent to all about her, trusting entirely in the strength and brain and love of her in whose arms she rested, paid no attention to what passed.

And the girl, with safety, with life, there in her hand, did no longing seize her? did no thought of self-preservation flash across her mind?

No.

She looked, and saw life for one, for one only.

The rope dropped from her grasp; again her arm enfolded that little form; again her lips gave tender, firm utterances of encouragement, and they floated on, on past a projecting point that hid them from view of their would-be rescuers.

Behind that point, battling with eddy and current

and rush, was a long, strange-looking raft, formed of two telegraph poles lashed together by wires.

A stout, strong man, in tattered clothing, with blood streaming from his face and every exposed part of his body, stood guiding this craft by a long timber. Another man, tall and slender, equally torn in head and limb, equally ragged in appearance, gave words of command. Both men were bareheaded and barefooted.

The bed-float hurried on.

"To the right! Scull out, sergeant, scull out!"

"Aye! aye! sir! scull out it is!" and the man at the timber worked, and the timber held to its duty, and the rushing tide fought, and tore, and twisted to defeat their purpose.

"Steady, now, sergeant, let her drift!"

"Drift it is, sir!"

The pole raft had gotten the right impetus. Cool calculation, keen eyes, steady brain, intelligence and education were directing that craft, and manly strength, unquestioning obedience, unswerving loyalty was at its helm.

They drew near the float that carried the girl and child; a few moments more, a few seconds of time, and the current would carry them to its side.

A great tree, with heavy, outspreading branches, with immense roots, swept in between them, plunged down upon, carried under, the float.

"More to the right! Sheer off behind the tree! Move to the right! Scull, sergeant! Scull!"

"Aye! aye! sir!"

And again the helmsman put forth his strength.

Once more the poles had answered their will; again they had their course shaped rightly.

Was the float safe?

Yes! Thank God! The great tree goes on; the float comes to the surface.

But it carries no human burden now.

Bartine strains his eyes. There is a mass of something a little before him.

A glimpse of golden hair rises in the water, then a flash-sight he has of a child's face.

He plunges in! One cry he gave to warn his companion.

With a jerk the sailor unships his rudder, and drops it on the logs. Then he throws himself flat.

A hand, Bartine's hand, rises above the water, and is in the grasp of true Jack. The colonel's arm supports — what?

But a minute more and all are on the raft. There is life in the little child, the submersion had been but momentary.

Was there life in that other form? Yes. Blood flowed from the white temple; a cruel wound showed where a limb of the great tree had, with stunning blow, made a long gash in the noble brow.

"I know this little one;" said Adams, "she is one of Captain Randolph's. I've seen her there when I went to see — Maggie."

And the brave fellow gulped down a sob as he recalled one to whom his honest heart was given, one whom he might not, in all probability would not, ever see again.

Bartine never answered, never heard him. He was

upon his knees, bending over the figure of the woman he loved, that he had come to see — and found.

And the raft drifted on. Adams was busy about the little girl, and Bartine chafed the hands and cleansed the blood from the brow of Leonora, and talked low to her in words such as he could not have believed would ever come from his lips.

Suddenly she opened her eyes and looked up at him. Her eyes, blue as the blossoms of the forget-me-not, they shone upon him, and looked into his with a tender light that told her love, and, with the confession that they spoke, was blended the gaze of innocence, born in purity of soul.

"I knew you would come! I knew you would come!" she murmured, a song of triumph even in her whispered tones.

"I am here, Leo. I will take care of you; have no fear now," he said.

"Fear! I have no fear. What can harm me now?" she answered him, and closed her eyes, a smile of perfect peace and joy upon her lips.

But a moment she lay thus, while Bartine watched her, forgetful of all else.

Then, with a terrible cry, Leonora raised herself.

"Rose! Rose! little Rose! Where are you!"

She gazed wildly about her. The colonel seized her, and held her on the raft by main strength. The child lay near them, conscious, but too utterly exhausted to speak or make an effort to move.

"Sergeant!"

"Aye! aye! sir!" Adams was recalled to duty, all the soldier or sailor in him waked up again.

He was on his knees, bending over the figure of the woman he loved.

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"To the shore! Get to the shore quick as you can."

They had drifted near land; it took little effort or time to reach it.

"Sergeant, our work is here. I must attend to this lady. I know her well. Do you take the child and seek aid for her somewhere. We will meet as soon as I can arrange it; though now I know not where to say it shall be. You hunt me, and I'll hunt you. Take care of the child; she needs attention at once."

"Yes, colonel, I'll find you before long," and Jack, a soldier, now he was on land, saluted, then gathered into his arms the sleeping child.

"Little Rosy, Maggie's pet," he said, "I'll care for you for Maggie's sake, and for your poor, sweet face." He looked around him, got "his bearings," and started off. The colonel had ordered him to go.

And Bartine and Leo — she alternately lying quiet, and again starting in delirium and calling for Rose — they were left alone on the muddy bank, amid great heaps of *débris*, and ghastly bodies of the perished almost within reach of outstretched hand.

"That blow, and the strain upon her, has crazed her, my poor Leo! She must be taken away from here; this place, these terrible sights would render her insane for life."

Such were the thoughts that crowded upon him, and he tried to induce her to walk, with his support.

With gentle words he tried to calm her and to urge her away. He thought he could find some roof to shelter her. At least he could try.

Leo would walk a few steps, then stop and seem

about to fall. Then she would make the air ring with her calls for Rose.

"She is crying for me!" she sobbed, as she struggled in Bartine's restraining arms. "Why have you taken me from her? Hear her call me! They trusted me, I swore to save her, and you take me from her!"

Thus she raved and cried and called aloud. Then she refused to move a step further. All assurances that Rose was safe in good hands had no effect upon her. She was evidently insensible to all but the child, the perils they had passed through, and the overwhelming idea that she had neglected her duty.

Bartine could hesitate no longer; putting forth all his strength, he grasped Leo in his arms, and, assuming his most commanding tone of voice, ordered her to "be quiet, at once!"

The tone of authority, the strength with which he held her, the ease with which he seemed to carry her, had the effect of stilling her voice and rendering her passive in his arms.

She evidently did not know him, she lay still and unresisting, while he bore her on. Through her half-closed eyelids, she watched him closely.

He could not keep his gaze from off her face. The thought that he had her in his arms, that now she was his to hold and protect dazed for a moment this man of iron will.

One careless step, some piece of the thickly strewed wreckage caught his foot. He stumbled; he felt that he must fall. To save Leo from hurt, he let her roll out of his arms, and then he went down heavily.

His shoulder struck some metal frame or body, and the force of the jar, the pain, with weakness caused by intense labor and exertion, sickened, stunned him for a moment.

Before he could gather strength to rise, the crazed Leo was on her feet; with eyes ablaze, her arms outstretched, she rushed away into the dusk of night, into the wilderness of misery.

"Rose! Rose!" he heard her voice; fainter and fainter it grew.

He got upon his feet, but staggered and reeled like a drunken man; he could make no step forward yet.

"Rose! Rose!" Far off, how very far off that cry sounded now.

Where would she go? what would she do? Leo, his Leo! crazed and wandering, lost amid such scenes as these! He covered his face with his hands, and wept. Leo, his love! He had found her, had rescued her from death.

And he had lost her!

CHAPTER XIII.

A ROLL OF HONOR.

WE write history — and romance.

On these pages of record, in this story of ravenous elements, terrible sacrifice, miraculous escapes and noble deeds, romance becomes history, and history blends inextricably with romance.

While following closely the fortunes and adventures of those whom we have introduced particularly as

dramatis personæ, we would be failing in duty did we neglect mention of others who well won, in that awful strife, the right to have their names inscribed high on the roll of honor, for saving lives at risk of their own.

Many an unknown hero went to death in vain endeavor to rescue a fellow-mortal. Many a living soul of valor will remain in modest retirement, satisfied with the comfortable knowledge of what they did, and what they risked in behalf of others in that fearful struggle. But some are known. The list is long and illustrious.

Honor to whom honor is due!

Would that we could pen the name of every man and woman who faced death with calm intrepidity, during the outpouring of the watery volcano, to snatch from the annihilating flood perishing mortals. But of the many, we have the names of few; to these few, however, let us, so far as words can requite, tender the reward so justly due, so gloriously earned.

Miss Nina Speck, daughter of Rev. David Speck, of Chambersburg, Penn., was visiting her brother in Johnstown. Thus, simply, she tells the story of her experiences and her services.

"My brother's house was in Kernsville, a part of Johnstown, through which Stony Creek ran. Although we were a square from the creek, the back-water from the stream had flooded the streets in the morning, and was up to our front porch. At four o'clock on Friday afternoon, we were sitting on this porch watching the flood, when we heard a roar, as of a tornado, or mighty conflagration.

"We rushed up-stairs and got out upon the bay-

window. There an awful sight met our eyes. Down the Conemaugh Valley was advancing a mighty wall of water and mist with a terrible roar. Before it were rolling houses and buildings of all kinds, tossing over and over. We thought it was a cyclone; the roar sounded like a tempest among forest trees. We started down-stairs, and out through the rear of the house to escape to the hillside near by. Before we could reach there the water was up to our necks, and we could make no progress. We turned back, and were literally dashed by the current into the house, which began to move off as soon as we were in it again. From the second story I saw a young man drifting toward us. I broke the glass from the frames with my hands and helped him in, and in a few minutes more I pulled in an old man, a neighbor, who had been sick.

"Our house moved rapidly down the stream, and fortunately lodged against a strong building. The water forced us out of the second-story up into the attic. Then we heard a lot of people on our roof, begging us for God's sake to let them in. I broke through the roof with a bed-slat, and pulled them in. Soon we had thirteen in all, crouched in that attic.

"Every now and then a building would crash against our rocking house. Every moment we thought we would go down. The roofs of all the houses drifting by us were covered with people, nearly all praying, and some singing hymns, and now and then a house would break apart, and all would go down. On Saturday, at noon, we were rescued, making our way from one building to the next by crawling on narrow planks. I counted hundreds of bodies lying in the debris, most

of them covered over with earth, and showing only the outlines of the form."

No fainting, shrieking, helpless doll, this Nina Speck --a brave, self-reliant, helpful woman of resources she. Write *her* name down!

Hear the story of Mr. G. B. Hartley, of Philadelphia, one of the five survivors out of fifty-five guests of the Hotel Hurlbut:

"It is like a horrible nightmare in a picture before me. When the great rush of water came I was sitting in the parlor of the Hotel Hurlbut. Suddenly we were startled to hear loud shouts on the streets. Their cries were accompanied by a loud, crashing noise. At the first sound we all rushed from the room panic-stricken. There was a crash, and I found myself pinned down by broken boards and debris of different kinds. The next moment I felt the water surging in. I knew it went higher than my head, because I felt it. The water must have passed like a flash or I would not have come out alive. After the shock I could see that the entire roof of the hotel had been carried off. Catching hold of something, I managed to pull myself up onto the roof. The roof had slid off, and lay across the street. On the roof I had a chance to observe my surroundings. Down on the edge of the roof I spied the proprietor of the hotel, Mr. Benford. He was nearly exhausted, and it required his every effort to hold on. Cautiously advancing, I managed to creep down to where he was, I tried to pull him up, but found that I was utterly powerless; he was nearly as weak as myself, and could do very little toward helping. We did not give up, however, and in a few minutes, by dint of

struggling and putting forth every bit of strength, Mr. Benford managed to crawl upon the roof. Crouching and shivering on another part of the roof were two girls, one a chambermaid of the hotel, and the other a clerk in a store that was next to it. The latter was in a pitiable plight. Her arm had been torn from its socket. I took off my overcoat and gave it to her; Mr. Benford did the same for the other, for it was quite chilly. A young man was nursing his mother, who had her scalp completely torn off. He asked me to hold her head until he could make a bandage. He tore a thick strip of cloth, and bound it about her head. The blood saturated it before it was well on. I was rescued more dead than alive."

Mr. Henry was engineer that day of the second section of express train No. 8, between Pittsburg and Altoona. He saw the flood that day, and tells:

"I thought of the passengers in my train. The second section of No. 8 had three sleepers. In these three cars were about thirty people, who rushed through the train crying to the others: 'Save yourselves!' Then came a scene of wildest confusion. Ladies and children shrieked, and the men seemed terror-stricken. I succeeded in helping some ladies and children off the train, and up to the high lands. Running back, I caught up two children, and ran for my life to a higher place. Thank God, I was quicker than the flood! I deposited my load in safety on the high land just as the flood swept past us."

Remember Charles Hepenthal, eighteen years of age, a schoolboy, whose home is in East Liberty, Penn. He was on his way to Bellefonte in the day

express that Friday eve. When the flood reached the train, at Sang Hollow, and the passengers crowded to view the destruction, and give what aid they might, the boy stood quietly among them. A small frame house came pitching down the mad tide; an eddy floated it in, near to the train, so close that the wailing cries of an infant were heard, piercing their way through the roar.

Charles Hepenthal's heart and courage grew to man's stature that moment. He would rescue that little one! In vain were arguments and reasons used by all about him to dissuade him from plunging into certain death. He was resolved.

The bell cord was cut from the cars. He tied it fast about his body; out into the whirling stream he went; he gained the house, and he returned, bearing in his arms the babe.

But his work was not done. He told the cheering crowd that the mother of the child was still in the house, and he must save her also. With a plank as support he swam again the raging tide; his task was this time much more difficult, his struggle far more severe. But he fought the fight, and won; he brought the woman safely to firm land. Score high and deep Charles Hepenthal's name!

The people of the towns of Bolivar and Garfield, and Nineveh, of every place past which the torrent swept, exerted every energy, used every means, to succor those in peril, and they saved many.

Mr. McCutcheon, a gentleman of Verona, dragged from a dense mass of timber a cradle covered with clothing. As he lifted the wrappings a baby boy, five

months of age, smiled up into his face and crowed with delight as the old man placed it, cradle and all, in safety.

Mr. Henry Lauffer snatched a blue-eyed infant, gave a strong, helping hand to its mother, and, leaping from an engulfed car, reached high ground just in time to save their lives and his own.

J. W. Esch, a railroad employé, rescued sixteen people at Nineveh.

Edward Deck, another railroad man, of Lockport, plunged into the torrent and saved an old man who was floating on a tree. Immediately after Mrs. Adams, of Cambria, with her two children, swept by, confined in the upper story of her house. Again Edward Deck risked his life, he swam to the house; in breaking through the tin roof, he severed an artery in his left wrist; the loss of quick-flowing blood weakened his body, but not his spirit. He rescued the mother and children.

Let others add to our list and sound the praises of the hundreds who deserve laudation and reward.

We have done what we could.

CHAPTER XIV.

WRECKED AND ADRIFT.

"ROSE! Rose!"

How terribly sounded that shrill cry as it fell upon the ears of Edward Bartine. How black and dense was the misery that crushed his heart as the call grew fainter and fainter in the distance.

And now he felt his weakness, the physical pain of his battered and mangled body, his bruised, fast stiffening limbs. Food he had not tasted, or thought of, through all those hours of superhuman exertion, and almost total exhaustion was the result.

Twice he essayed to follow Leonora, each time, after a few reeling steps, he sank to the ground.

Never had he known, never had he conceived, of misery like this. That fate could beat him so entirely; that fortune could desert him so utterly.

His bare feet were torn, and bleeding, and swollen; they burned as though he were walking on red-hot iron.

Pride in his strength and manhood, faith in his will-power was crushed. He had always contended that "what a man *would* do, that man could do," and now he had forced upon him the fallacy of his arrogant dogma. There is a limit to human fortitude, and Colonel Bartine had reached the extreme of his endurance.

Actual inability to move, the torture caused by standing on his feet, obliged him to rest where he last fell, while he strove to gather strength and collect his thoughts.

Leo was gone!

How should he follow her, and whither. In her mental condition, she might change her course at any moment; laboring under the hallucination which had so suddenly possessed her, she might, probably would, either plunge into the water, or, seizing some timber capable of bearing her weight, venture by such means

once more upon the gulf from which he had dragged her, in search of the child she thought she had deserted.

The thought maddened him, but the madness brought back unnatural vigor to his frame. He felt no more, the racking pains, he cared nothing for the terribly lacerated feet, they *must* carry him on, on, anywhere everywhere, in search of Leo.

Spurred by the excitement of his misery, he sprang up, and started away "like a giant refreshed with new wine."

It was near nightfall; darkness crept over the sky as he wandered recklessly on; and still he walked, darting here and there, wherever he could see a figure moving through the gloom, asking hurried questions, halting to stoop and pass his hands over any recumbent body that he saw lying in or near his path, or stumbled over, and his touch each time recognized the clammy cold of death.

On and on he wandered through all the blackness of that terrible night.

Leonora too was drifting, all unconscious of her surroundings, aimlessly over the desolated land.

"Rose! Rose!" Her cry still sounded in the air, and was answered by groans and wailings and appeals from stricken, wounded, prostrate mortals in every direction. She flitted in every direction from whence came a sound of human voice. She answered none of those she reached, was deaf to their words, blind to their injuries.

"Tell me! where is Rose?" was all she would say to any, then spring away into the shadows before their

prayers for aid, or curses at her inhumanity, could reach her.

Some kindly souls, women and men, either happily uninjured and unbereft, and even some who had lost all near and dear to them — these, detecting her frenzied state, tried to detain her with words of comfort, and pity, and soothing import. But she would halt no more than a moment, no longer than to repeat her short, simple question: "Tell me! where is Rose?" then hurry on once more.

She would stop longer with children; little girls she would catch up and hold to her, and gaze into their faces, and pass her hand over their features, as though she thought touch would do duty for her failing eyes, and, after one long look, with heart-breaking sigh, she would gently put down the surprised little one, often kissing the begrimed cheek. "You are not my Rose," she would say, "Tell me where is Rose?" and away.

Many miles she covered, backward and forward, in those hours, yet went not a great distance from her starting point. She traveled in a circle.

She fell over wreckage, she climbed over great piles of *debris*, she stepped upon human bodies, and on carcasses of animals; she waded knee-deep in mud and slime, sometimes in filthy water; she explored the ruins of houses, she looked under brush-heaps, and tore her way into and through the limbs of prostrated trees. Her clothing was shredded into rags; her light slippers had been lost long before; her magnificent golden hair was loose, all unconfined, and flying in damp, matted masses about her face and shoulders,

and through it the fiery gleam of her eyes pierced with the fierce dartings of a maddened brain.

One thought possessed her, she must find Rose; one terror burned her heart — an agony born of devotion to a trust — she had been recreant to her duty; she had lost Rose.

And brave Jack Adams, nursing the sleeping child in his arms, he, too, was adrift. For once his ready wit and fertility of resource seemed to fail him. His brain was dizzy, his feet in a fearful condition, his strength fast leaving him. The little one he carried weighed a thousand pounds, and each moment added hundreds to his load.

"Jack," he muttered to himself; "Jack, you're beat out; you're pounded and licked. I'd sooner stand against Old Stonewall's brigade with my fists. I'd rather fight the Merrimack with a pop-gun than tackle such a job as this." But he never thought of giving up. He was too good a sailor not to be able to "shape his course" to, or in the direction of, any point he desired to reach. But where to go! To Johnstown, in the direction from whence that sweeping death had come? No; his remaining sense told him that, if the horror that was all about him had reached that far, tenfold ruin lay in the path to and at his home. At last he felt, he knew, that he must rest or fall. Still he staggered on to three or four mounds of rubbish, and felt of each with his feet as he clambered about and over it, to judge of what it was composed. Then, when just about to give up, his foot touched something soft. He hugged the child close in one arm, knelt

down, and felt of the object with his hands. It was a confused, tumbled heap of bed-clothing. Carefully as he could he arranged it. He laid the little one down. With the last strength of his hands he twisted and wrung the muddy water from several blankets; these he folded and laid as smoothly as he could; onto these he lifted the unconscious Rose, then lay down, drew her head upon his broad breast, wrapped his arms about her, and in a moment drifted into the land of dreams.

Brave Jack! Grand sailor-heart! Gallant soldier-soul! Knowing nothing but fierce resistance to all that could offer combat, holding naught but kindness for the vanquished, feeling only tenderness for the weak and suffering; loyalty to friends and duty your sole religion. Brave Jack! If angels visited that lonely spot that night, surely their protecting wings hovered over the forms of you and your little charge, strangely encamped, sleeping the death-like sleep of exhausted nature.

There was no repose for Edward Bartine; the weakness to which he had momentarily succumbed, had, by reaction, added to his power of will. The spirit, the invincible courage of his nature, and not his body, was now supporting him. He was resolved that he would halt not, rest not, in his search for Leo, while a spark of life remained within him, and, with every sense strained to its utmost tension, he tramped and hunted and listened, and peered into the night — and tramped on.

Leonora, too, sustained by that unnatural endurance often given those in her state, knew nothing of fatigue,

felt no want of or desire for food or rest; her tender feet, bruised and bloated out of all semblance of their natural dainty shapeliness, plodded ceaselessly about, still in a circle. Her voice, now only a hoarse whisper, still asked all she met, sometimes asked of the phantoms her disordered brain conjured up before her, ever asked the same question:

"Tell me! where is Rose?"

Wrecks! wrecks all; adrift, in the sea of night, under the shadow of universal ruin.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE STORM — SEEKING PORT.

GRAY-EYED morn at last looked out over the hills, and the light of day opened upon fifteen miles of ruin-racked, devastated, desolate land; death strewed the earth, gaunt misery stalked through leagues on leagues, and picked its way with careful steps around and over ghastly, bloated remains of humanity, and met, face to face, still other moving misery equal to its own. Tears were few, dried up and exhausted were the fountains of grief; dry eyes, sunken and burning, told more eloquently the agony lips could not express; tongues were silenced under this benumbing castigation, except when some thrilling cry from bursting heart and frenzied brain rang wildly forth in lamentation, appealing prayer or awful curses.

"For when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape."

"The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied; he hath thrown down in his wrath the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he hath brought them down to the ground; he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof."

"He hath bent his bow like an enemy; he stood with his right hand as an adversary and slew; he poured out his fury like fire. The Lord was an enemy."

The Book, with all its word-painting of inspiration, can describe no horrors greater than those which cumbered, crowded, piled the valley of Conemaugh when day-dawn drew back the curtains of night and laid bare that vast, wide-spreading scene of carnage.

Results best tell the direful tale.

At Nineveh, Edward Pitcairn, trainmaster, cared for the bodies of more than one hundred victims — young girls and women numbered most. With twin babes clasped close to her breast, a dead mother was found. With arms enwrapped about each other, an old, gray-haired man and a young woman, evidently his daughter, were on the stranded roof of a house, crushed to death by bulky wreckage. Seventy-five corpses lay in one field, fifty of them women, and twenty were girls. Swollen bodies lay everywhere, distorted features and outstretched limbs, telling of the struggle to the last. On piles of *débris*, in beds of mud, in filthy pools, on the river bank, on what had once been the highway, in the tangled greenery, in trees uprooted and prostrate, and above, among the limbs and branches of trees still standing, were the dead.

"Do you see that fringe of trees?" said a man of

the signal tower, pointing below, "Well, we saw scores of children swept in there. I believe that, when the time comes, they will find almost a hundred bodies of children in there among those bushes."

New Florence is the little town above Nineveh. One hundred and nine dead were the results of the first gleaning there, and most of these were women. Two hundred and twenty more were found, lightly covered by deposit left by the waters, on a little island between these villages.

Johnstown was swept, crushed, almost off of, or into, the earth. Imagination could never have conjured up the picture presented by that reality. Where long rows of dwellings and business houses stood yester-noonday, mountains of ruins covered the space. Two thousand houses of brick and stone and timber were hurled from their foundations, torn and dragged and battered into fragments, and strewn over miles of country. From the woolen-mill above the island to the bridge, a distance of about two miles, a strip of territory, nearly half-a-mile in width, was washed *clean;* not a strip of timber, or one brick on top of another, being left to tell the story.

Men, women and children plodded about these desolate wastes, looking in vain, trying to locate the boundaries, the sites of their former homes. Hundreds and hundreds of homeless ones who had dropped in their tracks from fatigue, and slept upon the sodden earth as soundly as ever they did on beds, waked with the morning, waked to realities more horrible than ever troubled their most frightful dreams, to hurry distractedly from one ruin to another, or saunter, bereft of

energy or hope, about and around in what seemed to them a strange country, or to stand idly gazing, stunned by a sense of helplessness.

A cry of distress, and the struggles of little Rose wakened Jack Adams from slumber. He tightened his grasp upon her, fearing that she might spring from him, and his voice took tone from the tenderness and pity of his heart as he tried to calm her fears. She called for her mother, for " papa," for her brother and sister and for " Miss Leo."

" See, pretty! listen, sweetheart!" said Jack, as his great hand patted her. " I'm going to take you to them all, and to Maggie. You remember Maggie, don't you, pretty one? "

" Yes. Where is Maggie and papa, and mother and Miss Leo, and all of them? Take me to them. Oh, please take me home."

" I will, lassie ! God helping me, I will ! Only be a good, brave little girl, and I'll find them all for you. Don't you know me? "

" No! who are you? "

" You've seen me at your house, with Maggie. You saw her once, only the other day on the back porch, at home, box my ears, and you laughed at the way the slap sounded. Can't you remember that? I'm Jack, Maggie's Jack."

He was ragged and dirty, his face was caked with mud, scratched and patched with coagulated blood, bare places showed upon his scalp, where the hair had been scraped off, but there was no mistaking the ring of honesty in his voice, no doubting the kindly look of his eyes.

"Maggie's Jack! Why, yes! I know you now. But how? what?" She looked about her, at the destruction around them, at her own filthy, disordered dress. Then the past, the terrible past hours, seemed to come back in one o'erwhelming flood upon her memory. She shut her eyes for a moment, closed her lips firmly, and stood still, as if to gather strength and resolution.

Then her eyelids opened, she gave her little hand into the palm of the man who stood by her side, she looked up to him. No word she uttered, but her eyes told of confidence, of full reliance, and they said, plainly as though her lips had given speech: "I trust you, I will go where you think best to take me!"

Jack understood. "That's the brave lassie!" he said, in cheery voice. "That's the brave little soldier girl! We'll come out all right and safe; we'll find papa, and Maggie, and all of them. Captain Randolph's little Rose, you are. I know your papa, I soldiered with him."

No word in answer, but her hand pressed his, the information added to her confidence, her faith.

"Shall I carry you, sweetheart?" She shook her head "no," tugged at his hand to hurry him away, and they started to hunt the home that no longer existed, to seek the papa that lay cold in death. Gallant, wee lassie! poor little fatherless one! Yet how many there were in even worse straits than this.

The morning hours passed, the day grew. A tall, haggard man staggered on among the refuse heaps, the bodies of the drowned, down by the river side, up on the higher ground, everywhere — his eyes taking in,

with one sweeping glance, everything within range of sight. It was Colonel Bartine. He had procured a pair of great, heavy shoes to cover his feet, a felt hat, from which he had wrung the water, was on his head, the rim flapping down over his face, and a dirty, heavy overcoat covered his bare breast and back. Those from whom he had taken these articles, would need them no more, and they were very necessary to him. He had been on too many battlefields to stand on ceremony with the dead. His watch and his money, a considerable sum, were safe. He had secured them on his person when he prepared for his fight with the flood. Stern resolution, dauntless courage and will-power still sustained him; he had had his moment of weakness, nothing but death could conquer him now. When he gave up his search for Leo, it would be when he gave up his last breath of life. Hunger, or thirst, or fatigue, he knew not. He was past all that. Leo! only Leo!

At last! at last, he found her! A wreck, stranded and beaten to a standstill; a pitiful, wide-eyed, distracted, muttering wreck of beautiful humanity, cowering beneath a roof that overtopped a pile of wreckage, holding in her arms the body of a little child, carefully cleansing the poor, cold face, kissing the half-opened lips, cooing to it, moaning over it, whispering tender words into the unhearing ears, stroking her own cheeks with the lifeless hands, and calling upon it as "Rose! her Rose! to waken and speak."

She sprung to her feet when Bartine appeared, she hugged the body of the child to her, and turned to speed away.

He seized and held her. For a little time the violence of her struggles caused him to exert all his strength. Then she became more calm. He took the dead child from her and laid it down. "We will send the carriage for Rose, she is tired and asleep," he said. "Come, we will go home and send the carriage for her."

She permitted him to lead her away. A few yards she walked, then tottered. He caught her, and she sank into his arms in stupor. He picked up her insensible form and carried her, as though she were an infant, to a house he saw not far distant, on high ground.

A woman sat in the doorway of that house, her face buried in her hand, as though trying to hide from sight the horrors that surrounded her. As Bartine drew near he could see within rows of bodies laid close together, and disposed as straightly as the contorted, rigid limbs would permit.

He spoke to the woman. She looked up at him listlessly, terror and grief had taken from her face the power of expression.

"Madam," said Bartine, "here is a girl, a lady, who escaped the flood. She is crazed with grief, and from an injury—a blow on the head. I am exhausted, totally exhausted, from fighting in the water, and wandering in search of this lady. Can you not give us here a spot to rest? Will you watch her while I get an hour of sleep? I will pay you well, pay you anything. I have money, plenty; you can take my watch from my pocket now as security. Will you let

us in and watch her while I sleep; then I will take her home, if a home is left for her."

The woman still looked up to him with her dull eyes and white face. She answered not, moved not.

"You *must* let us in! Will you let this girl die before your eyes? She is crazed, and perishing. She must have food, can you give her nothing? Can you not force her to eat?"

The stern tone of command in which he spoke roused the woman. She stood erect.

"Look there!" she said, and waved her hand toward the interior. "Look there! there is a graveyard vault, packed with dead. We are all dead! A crazy girl, you say! I am crazy myself! One more, dead or crazy, crazy or dead, or a hundred more! What's the difference? The world has come to an end! We're all in hell! Eat! ha, ha! Eat the dead there, *there's* lots of meat for you. Go in if you want to, you'll soon be dead as the rest!"

And she seated herself once more on the step, and again her face was buried in her hands.

Bartine stood astounded during this attack. The woman was not really crazy, but watching, grief and horror had made her really so. While yet he paused, he heard a voice from the room. "Mother! Mother!"

Then a worn, frightened-looking girl of about twenty years of age came forward. To her again the request was made.

"What can we do, sir!" she answered, sadly. "See with what our house is crowded. Come in if you wish, you are welcome. We have nothing to eat, not a morsel. I will do what I can for the poor lady.

I can give her a skirt of my own, and (she whispered), I'll take a pair of shoes for her poor feet;" she pointed to several bodies of women lying there.

The colonel stepped into the house, past the unnoticing woman sitting on its threshold. Led by the kindly girl, he carried Leonora into a small back room, and laid her down upon the bare floor. He put his hand in his pocket and drew out his soaked wallet, a long one, from it the edges of wet, ragged greenbacks were projecting. He was about to open it, when the girl, who had been bending over insensible Leo, looked up.

"Sir, sir!" she said, in proud reproof, "do you think I — we, could take money for this? Do you *think* it?"

Bartine blushed, under all the dirt and tan of his face. He removed his hat, and made a bow of humble reverence. "I beg your pardon, miss, I beg your pardon; you are one of God's true women. My poor friend is in a terrible state of body and mind. I am worn out. Keep watch over her while I sleep, only an hour. God will reward you, if I cannot!"

He staggered into the front room, dropped down between two staring, hideous bodies, and lay dead and motionless in slumber, unconsious of all about him, in appearance a corpse like the rest.

CHAPTER XVI.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

JACK ADAMS, refreshed by sleep, was all his own man again. His confidence returned, and he felt equal

to any emergency. Familiarity with sudden changes of fortune, with every vicissitude that an adventurous life could bring, and blessed with a "happy-go-easy" temperament that always made the best of everything, Jack ever looked on the bright side — if his affairs had no bright side, he "scoured a shine on 'em," he would say.

With her little hand in his, Rose stepped quickly by his side. She asked no questions, made no remark. When he would say to her some cheering words, she would look up to him and faintly smile, a sweet, sad curving of the trembling lips that gave him heartache to see. Words she seemed determined not to utter, and she apparently blinded her eyes to all the terrors that lay in and beside their path.

To Jack's "Come now, little lady, sweetheart, let me carry you," she shook her head in sturdy refusal, and by a pull on his hand seemed to urge him on, toward home and papa.

Adams had resolved to reach Johnstown, or its former site, if he could. The sights that greeted their eyes as they walked, would, under other circumstances, have caused them to rush away, seeking oblivion. But they had already, even in this short time, grown accustomed, if not callous, to such scenes.

In one place, near the river bank, they moved to one side. Before them was a woman, half buried in the mire, only a limb showing. A little further on a side glance showed a mother, and her babe upon her breast. Near by lay a husband and wife, their arms wound around each other's necks. Fifty bodies they stepped over or moved away to avoid. On the oppo-

s' .e side innumerable corpses could be seen, all partly covered with slimy deposit. As they neared Johnstown the masses of wreckage grew in bulk. A grand piano was lying on the bank, and not a board or key was broken; almost on top of it were two immense iron boilers, all had been carried on the torrent as though they were feathers. Still further on thousands of people were scattered in groups along the railroad tracks, and each one of them had one or more of blood kindred lying dead, either in the wreckage above, in the river below, or in the still burning, murderous furnace of the great raft at the bridge.

Over on the other side of the river stood one-half of the water-works of the Columbia Iron Company, a structure that had been built of massive stone. It was filled with planks from houses, and a large abutment of conglomerate material was piled up fully thirty feet in front of it. A little above, on the same side, could be seen what was left of the Cambria Iron Works; it had possessed one of the finest plants in the world; some of the walls were standing, but not a vestige of the heavy, valuable machinery remained in sight. The two upper portions of the works were swept away almost entirely, and under pieces of fallen iron and wood could be seen the bodies of more than forty workmen. So far as the eye could reach, in every direction, not a house that was left standing was in plumb. Hundreds of them were turned on their sides, and in some cases three or four stood one on top of the other.

They turned a point where there was a bend in the

river, and the fiery dam and raft, blazing for a quarter of a mile square above the bridge, came into view.

"My God!" screamed a woman, who was hastening up the track, "can it be that any are in there?"

"Yes; over a thousand," replied a man who had just come from the neighborhood, and it is now known that he estimated the number at one thousand too few.

Scenes of misery and suffering and agony and despair were so frequent as hardly to attract attention. One man, a clerk, Adams knew him well, was reeling about intoxicated. Suddenly, with a frantic shout, he threw himself over the bank into the river, and would have been carried to death had he not been caught by persons below.

"Let me die!" he exclaimed, when they rescued him. "My wife and children are gone; I have no use for life!" and he threw himself upon the ground. Passion and liquor stupefied him. Those who knew him said that he never tasted liquor before.

Through such throngs, amid such scenes, Jack and the little girl wended their way, unnoticed and unnoticing. Spite of his silence and brave words he uttered, his heart, whenever he would permit himself to think, was full of wonder, and pity, and hope for Maggie, his promised wife. He loved her well, better than all else in life, and knew that he possessed all her affection. They had planned, and partially provided for, and had passed many happy hours in talking of, the snug home they would soon occupy together. He had tried to persuade her to give up service and live with some

friends she had until the wedding day. But the independent girl steadily refused.

"And do ye think I'm coming to ye with just the duds I stand in, and never a cent in my pocket? 'Deed, then, Jack Adams, I'll put as much into that house as ever ye will, or I'll never set foot into it. And ye'll need it all, with yer sailor wasteful ways, and yer soldier free-handed nonsense. But I'll cure ye. It's me'll be the paymaster in that ship. D'ye mind that, Jack!"

"I'm willing, Maggie, money's safer with you than me. I never could keep or save it."

"Don't I know it? and ain't that the reason I'm going to get all I can? And why for should I be leaving here until the time comes for me to go to my own house, eh? Ain't I with good people, that treats me right, and the dear hilder here? And Miss Leo ready to do any good turn for me she can. Mind yer own affairs Jack Adams, and let me mind mine, until we're made one, and then — then we'll see which of the two will be boss."

And Jack laughed and submitted.

His heart grew very heavy now as he thought of Maggie, and her real goodness, and her winning, pretty, pert ways, and sharp speeches, and the future looked well-nigh hopeless to him, without Maggie.

He knew the river and town well. He led Rose away from the crowd. High up on the bank he found a boat, cast away, broken, but not so badly as to defy his skill in mending it. Boards were plenty. With a piece of iron and nails, both easily found, he soon had

his craft fit for the very short voyage he intended to make.

While he was doing his patching, the little girl sat quietly by on a pile of rubbish, and watched him, saying nothing. He dragged the boat down to the river, and then went back for her.

"Sweetheart, you're not afraid to go in the boat with me, are you?"

She, by action of head and body, expressed her willingness to do as he thought best. He carried her down and placed her in the bow of the boat, where it would be raised out of the water by his weight at the other end. She looked at him, and uttered one word.

"Home?"

"Home!" said Jack, and the tears sprang into his eyes, and he gulped down a great lump that came up in his throat. Had this little one a home, or a relative on earth? he thought.

His strong arms, moving a stout board, and his sailor skill, sculled them over the rapid waters. Unseen by but few, Jack pulled the boat up high and dry, took the hand of the child and lifted her out. She looked confused, glanced everywhere. All Johnstown, all that was left of Johnstown, was one great tumbled, heaped-up, broken mass.

"Where, where is home and papa?" that was all she said. The man stooped and caught her up. He could not answer those words, he could not bear up against that piteous face, those pleading eyes, the sight of that little one, so young and yet so old, grown old so fast in misery.

She put her arms about his neck, she laid her cheek upon his shoulder. She said no word more, but sobs of anguish convulsed her whole body.

With his light burden and heavy heart, Jack strode on, climbing piles of timbers and bricks and masonry, and making his way in some wonderful manner around and over obstacles that seemed insurmountable and impenetrable. He scanned every foot of ground, once so familiar to him, to detect a corner, or a house, or any landmark that would give him a hint as to where he was, and how he should proceed. Every sign that might point out locality seemed to be obliterated.

A wretched woman, more dazed than himself, stood by a pool of muddy water, evidently trying, as was he, to find some traces whereby to guide her steps. Spite of her altered appearance and miserable dress, he knew her, and called her by name.

"Mrs. Fenn!"

She turned her grief-worn face, gazed at him with red and swollen eyes. She evidently recognized him, but expressed no surprise at his appearance there. Her voice was low, but thrilling in its pathos, as she said, as if in answer to a question:

"They are all gone. O God, be merciful to them. Tom had gone out that afternoon to buy food for me and our children. He never came back, that flood took my husband while he was providing for us. We were all in the parlor, me and the children, waiting and watching for him when the flood came. I told the children not to be afraid, that God was there with us, and that he would guard us from harm. Then the water

forced us into the second story, and I cheered them by telling them that father would soon come with a boat and take us all out safely. God knows I told the truth, I thought he would come, and he would have, had he been spared. Soon we had to go up in the garret to escape the flood. The waters followed us there, and soon our heads were crushing against the roof. I thought that, if we were to die, it was better to die in the open air. But still I was resolved to do what I could to save them. I managed to get to the window and open it. I put our oldest child on a plank that floated by, I kissed her, and, with a "God bless you," let her float away into the roaring torrent. Six times such rafts I sent away, each bearing a precious child. They were frightened, but they were good children, and had always learned to obey, and they knew I was doing the best I could for them.

"Then it came to Bessie's turn, our youngest and dearest, only four years old. I tied her to a broad plank firmly as I could, and hurriedly, for the room was full then of deadly water. I prayed over Bessie and blessed her, even more than the others. She was our lamb, our baby. I loved them all, oh, I loved them all; but I had two kisses and two blessings and two prayers for Bessie, where I gave the others only one. God forgive me, but she was Tom's favorite, and such a sweet, good child. She put her arms about my neck when I lifted her on the plank, and she said: 'You know you always said that God would take care of me, mamma; will he take care of me now?' I told her God was good, that He would watch over her, and that she should have no fear, and then she was car-

ried away. 'I'm not afraid, mamma,' she called out, and I heard her, but could not see her, and that's all, except that the roof was torn off and I floated away on it, and some Italians at Kernville saved me. I have found two of my dead children — Bessie and George — and there is not a mark on Bessie's sweet face. They are all gone, every one, husband and children, eight of them. If I could only find all my darlings and bury them, I could bow to the will of God; but they are all gone. I have lost everything on earth but my life."

She walked away as if unconscious that any one heard, that any one was near her. Adams made no attempt to stop her, made no answer to her. What could he say?

He resumed his tramp, still looking for some sign of a building known to him.

Two brawny fellows came toward a girl who was stooping over a pile of rubbish that looked like broken boxes of canned goods from a wrecked grocery store. Jack moved in the same direction. The girl was, to judge by her dress, one of the lowest of Italian lazzaroni; a piece of old blanket was over her shoulders, a single quilted skirt, old, ragged and mud-stained, hung from her waist; one foot was covered by a man's large shoe, on the other was a flapping carpet slipper; her luxuriant dark hair was hastily knotted at the back of her head, but stray locks fell over her neck and cheeks.

Jack had come near enough to see that she had unearthed two cans of something; they were standing near her. She dropped on her knees and dug with her

hands; she had found a box of crackers; one, two, she crowded into her mouth, and then went busily to work brushing the dirt off the others and laying them in a little pile near her cans. Adams approached slowly; he was about to beg a portion of her store, to beg for something for little Rose to eat. He wanted nothing for himself.

The two roughs also approached the girl, not hesitatingly, or slowly; their intentions were evidently to seize her treasures for themselves. Jack looked about for a spot whereon to deposit the little child. He could not fight with her in his arms, and he was not the man to see robbery like that perpetrated.

But before he could lay down his burden, the thieves were upon their prey. They had calculated on no resistance, and, disregarding the girl, each had laid hands on a portion of her findings. They found that they were not to get off easily. The girl took in the situation in a moment. Snatching the heavy shoe from off her foot, quick as a flash she sent its hard heel into one villain's face, then, with a great splinter of timber that lay ready to her hand, she clubbed the other scoundrel over his head.

"Ye thief of the world! ye black-hearted robbers! Ye'd steal the bread out of——"

But the pair of scoundrels waited for no more; their plunder had been dropped the first moment of assault; they turned and ran like cowards that they were.

The girl's voice had made Jack Adams stand rooted with astonishment and hope. When a loud "Ha! ha!" of victory came from the exultant amazon, and, still brandishing her war-club, she wheeled about as if yet

They turned and ran like cowards.

seeking for battle, Jack saw her face; her eyes fell on him.

"Maggie!"

"Jack!"

The cross-fire of words was simultaneous.

"Holy Mother of God! Jack! Jack! my darling!" and with one bound she seemed to clear the space between them and threw herself upon him.

There was no restraint, no regard for the proprieties, on observance of which Miss Maggie especially prided herself; no extravagance of speech or action, no wild demonstration of love and joy, was too violent for her to exhibit in her transport of happiness. She laughed, she cried, she hugged him and kissed him, she smothered and rendered him speechless with her overwhelming caresses. Never in her life did she, never again can she, crowd as much general love-making into hours as she expended in the half-minute before Jack could move or speak. She had been so blinded that she had not even seen what, or who, was in his arms.

"Maggie, Maggie, my Maggie, safe!" Jack gasped; then, breaking away for a few seconds, he said: "Look here!" and little Rose's face was turned from his shoulder toward Maggie.

Her shriek could be heard a mile, it seemed, as she tore the child from Jack's arms, and pressed her to her breast, and washed her face with a torrent of tears, and prayed over her to every saint in the calendar, and exhausted all endearing names known in love's vocabulary. But she became more quiet under the influences of the little one's unnatural calm, and, with streaming eyes, and smiling mouth for Jack, and soft, cooing

words for Rose, whom she cuddled to her bosom, she bade her affianced husband pick up and bring along her "marketing," and to come to the place where, with characteristic energy and self-helpfulness, she had already piled together planks that afforded a shelter, and was taking care of such aged, infirm and injured people as she had found needing help.

Briefly to tell the story of Maggie's escape, she had gone to the outskirts to visit some friends, believing that Jack would call there on his return from Pittsburg. She had not reached her destination when she heard the roar of the death-dealing torrent, and knew that only a miracle could save her. She heard a horse neigh and struggle in a stable near by. With one spring she was in the rude shed, dragged off the halter, turned the horse's head toward the door, leaped on his back, and, without saddle or bridle, let the frightened animal take his own course. Her clothing was nearly all dragged from her as it caught in passing through the narrow doorway of the shed; but the horse turned in the path to safety, fled before the flood, and, through instinct or providential direction, darted off up the hills before the waters were upon him or his rider.

All this Maggie quickly told while Rose lay in her lap and looked wistfully up into her face. She made Jack give her the crackers, and coaxed the little one, between her tears and pettings, to try and eat.

Jack started up. "I must go!" he said, "and look for my colonel, he has that young lady from your house, the one who taught the children — he has her in charge. It was her that saved Rose. She is hurt, maybe dead now. I must find my colonel, and report

for duty. I leave the little one with you, Maggie. She's safe now, anyhow, and you are safe too. So I'm good to fight the battle over again."

"It's Miss Leo ye mean, Jack, and dying! God forgive me for feeling happy just a minute ago, and the Holy Virgin save and protect and bless her. Amen. Go, Jack; go, man! Don't stand there a second, go help Miss Leo, go save her, or I'll hate you! Kiss me, Jack, darling — and go."

And the prayers of that good girl followed him, and her eyes wept themselves dry for him, and her heart loved him, as she sat, cold and half-clad, cuddling to her heart the sleeping child that lay there, restful in consciousness of protecting love.

CHAPTER XVII.

WEARY, WANDERING, SAD SEARCH.

COLONEL BARTINE slept for hours. When he waked, all was dark within the room where he lay on the damp, bare floor. Through the open door he could see that it was night. The atmosphere of the place was poisonous; he could *taste* the fetid, oozy thickness, the odor of decomposing human flesh, in every breath.

He threw out his hands; each fell upon a corpse, one on a cold, clammy face. He sat up and slowly recalled the appearance of the place where he laid him down. He thought of Leo, muttered her name once or twice, then drowsiness again overcame him, and he dropped back into slumber, to be tormented by dreams, compared with which the terrors of delirium tremens were visions of celestial beatitude.

Again he awaked; men were moving about, and carrying the dead into the open air. It was broad daylight, Saturday morning. He was refreshed by the rest, his brain was once more active, and he remembered all that had transpired.

He sprang to his feet; the living men stared at him with astonishment; they had considered him as one of those ready for the grave. He looked toward the room in which he had left Leo; the door was closed. He went to it and knocked, but received no answer. Delicacy prevented him from opening that door unbidden. Thrice he knocked; still no answer. He went out of the house, and walked round to the back. There he met the girl, young woman, in whose care he had left Leo the night before. She started and trembled when she saw him.

"I could not help it; indeed, sir. I could not help it!" she said.

"Help what?" he asked; fear in his heart. "Where is the lady I left with you last night?"

"Forgive me, sir. I did all I could for her. I gave her the only other dress I had in the world, and a covering for her head. I took a pair of shoes from off a — a dead woman, and washed her poor feet, and put the shoes on her. She seemed quiet, and reconciled to stay with me. I was tired, *so* tired! I tried to keep awake and watch her, but I fell asleep. I waked up at daylight and ——".

"And what?" He had curbed his impatience until then; "and what?"

"And she was gone — out through the window!"

The woman wrung her hands in agony, and stumbled

backward in haste, so murderous was the look of the man before her. She held up her hands as if in appeal, and shrunk within herself with fear of the blows she felt must fall upon her.

For a moment Bartine was beside himself with rage; he could have torn her limb from limb; hot curses formed themselves upon his tongue. No wrong to himself could have so moved him.

An instant's reflection brought sense into play. Why should he curse this poor girl? She had done her best, from motives of purest, unselfish charity. She had watched while *he* slept, and his anger was turned against himself. "Do not blame yourself," he said; "you were willing to do, and did all you could, and I thank you; thank you most sincerely. Can you form no idea which way she went?" He spoke very quietly, very sorrowfully.

The girl shook her head; she looked a picture of despair.

It was a bitter truth. Leo was lost to him once more.

Without another word, he turned, stood, looked in every direction, then, with a sigh that told of almost utter hopelessness, he walked away to resume the desperate search. For some little distance he wandered aimlessly, his eyes alone busy looking for some sign of the fugitive. His path lay through scenes such as have been before described.

In one place the roofs of forty houses were packed together as forty pieces of crumpled cardboard would be thrown one on top the other. He passed a bridge, the iron rods of which were twisted in a perfect spiral,

six times around one of the girders. Just beneath it was a woman's chest, broken open, half filled with sand, from which streamed out silk dresses and a veil. From under the box men were lifting the body of its owner, perhaps, so mutilated, so torn apart, that the rough workers turned sick at the sight. Not far off was a human foot and crumbling indications of a boot, but no signs of any other portions of human anatomy. A woman's hat, a reticule with a hand still clinging to it; two shoes, *with feet in them*, and parts of a dress, told the story of another unfortunate. Close to this spot a commercial traveler had perished. There was his broken valise, still full of samples, fragments of his shoes, and some remains of clothing.

But surely we have had a surfeit of these horrors. Other scenes of misery are yet to be disclosed, must be unveiled. Let us, then, go on for a time blind as was Bartine to this one ever-repeated picture of woe.

The thought occurred to him that Leo would probably seek Johnstown. She had ridden so much about the country there that, even in her demented state, she would know the direction she should take to reach her former home. To Johnstown he resolved to go. Probably he would meet Sergeant Adams, and enlist his able assistance. He inquired the way to that point from a man, and thitherward bent his steps. He asked no further questions regarding his way, he trusted to fate alone to guide him; what other means could he adopt? Then he remembered that the girl of the charnel house had told him of changing Leo's dress, of giving her a covering for her head, and he cursed his haste and stupidity in not asking for a description

of these. He would not know her now, in a strange, nondescript costume, unless he saw her face. Hours and hours he continued his weary wanderings. Working parties were already pulling and delving, with hands and ropes, and picks and axes, uncovering and lifting out shattered remains of human bodies, nearly always beyond identification, except by guesswork, or the locality where they were found. These laborers were toiling in every direction over the field of ruin. Human vultures were about, singly, in pairs, and in small bands, preying upon the dead, pillaging remains of houses, and greedily scratching over and into the piles of wreckage for any and all things valuable. But, in the begrimed, ragged state of every one, who could tell, even if they stopped to investigate, what man had the right to hunt and take possession of his findings? And so, for a time, the human vultures, more rapacious even than their feathered prototypes, worked unchecked, and gathered in a rich harvest. The howls and curses and demoniac yells of men crazed with vile liquor were mingled with the sobs and lamentations of women and children, and the groans of the injured. The flood left rum, barrels and barrels of it, along its track, to tempt good men to find solace in its draughts of forgetfulness, and to wake all the devils of hell within those normally fit for any brutal crime. The same waters carried away all food that might sustain the perishing multitude.

Bartine saw all this, but it moved him not; he walked on as though in a dream, intent upon one object, and that alone. Still on he wandered, still prosecuted his search.

Darkness comes early over the rain-dropping, leaden sky, that fittingly palled the valley ever since its ground became a vast bier, a resting-place, fifteen miles long, for unshrouded, uncared-for, uncovered dead. The smoke and steam from the placers of smoldering *débris* above the bridge, aid to hasten the gloom of night. Few lights gleam out, except those of the scattered fires that still fitfully flicker in the mass of wreckage. Gas went out with the flood, and oil has been almost entirely lacking since the disaster. Up on the hills around, bright sparks gleam out like lovely stars from candle-lights in the few houses built so high as to escape all injury. Down in the valley, the gloom settles over everything, making it look, from the higher ground, the vast death-pit that it is, causing a shudder at thought of entering it. The flames rising and falling over the ruins, are as the bale-fires of witches.

Through the heavy mist, figures are moving, prowling ghoul-like, among the *débris*, dark shapes of men who, by day and night, hover over places where some chance may disclose the body of a wife, mother or daughter. They pick listlessly away at the heaps in one spot for a time, then stray off, only to re-appear at another mound, pulling feverishly at some rags that look like a dress, or sounding with a stick into holes, to feel if there be yielding like dead flesh in respose to the probing thrust.

For noise, there is the heavy splashing of the Conemaugh over the rapids below the bridge, and occasionally the wild yell of some brutal villain maddened by drink. People gather in little groups, and talk in low tones, as they look over the dark, fire-beaconed

gulf. Movement about it is dangerous, the ways are only foot-paths, above on the rising ground, irregular and slippery. Many have already been badly hurt by falls over the bluffs, through the bridge or down banks. Lying under sheds, in ruined buildings, in the open air, everywhere, are the forms, wrapped in blankets, carpets, rags, and many without covering, of homeless ones, startingly like, in their immobility, the corpses strewn so plentfully near them.

Over a bridge of planks and ropes, mechanically exercising the care necessary in treading such a frail, swaying structure, Bartine made his way to the other side of the river. He knew he stood where Johnstown had been; he was in a wilderness of wreck, hemmed in by mountains of rubbish, faced by vast barricades that it seemed impossible to clamber over.

How hopeless to seek, amidst all these, for one poor creature, whose demented brain was active only in suggesting means to hide from him. But while he had life, he would never abandon his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A SABBATH OF SORROW.

SUNDAY after the battle! Was ever Sabbath-day like this, since "The Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it"?

No sun of hope or joy shone out on that day for these inhabitants of the valley of desolation.

"How many of yours are gone?" was the salutation now in Johnstown. It was always "gone;" that one

word meant so much. It was heard everywhere among the throngs that stood by the viaduct, and looked down upon the ghastly acres of unburied dead. It was heard at the rope bridge, where crowds waited the incessant file of empty coffins. It fell upon the ears on the steep hillside, where those who were left had fled for safety. It was the sole, sad greeting, whenever a friend, searching for *his* dead, met a neighbor: "How many of yours are gone?"

It was not spoken in tears, or with apparent emotion. It had simply replaced the "how-d'ye-do" of every-day life, with the eleven thousand people who survived the twenty-nine thousand who had populated that stricken section. The news had gone forth. Help was rushing from every quarter in trickling streams and great rivers of charity, to succor the afflicted, Resolute men were already at the front directing and systematizing the dreadful, sickening work that must be performed. General Hastings, Adjutant General of the State of Pennsylvania, was there. No holiday soldier is he. The right man in the right place he proved and has proven himself to be. No harness or glittering paraphernalia of rank and parade bedecked him; he came in "his working-clothes," to work, and his work will honor him while he lives, and embalm his memory when his bones are dust. Lieutenant George Miller, of the Fifth United States Infantry, too, with the calm judgment of a trained army officer and strict disciplinarian, was at General Hastings' right hand. Hundreds more of willing workers there were; we cannot give the honorable mention, by name, well due the many. The

grand "Red Cross Society," led by noble Clara Barton, with all her loyal aids by her side, came with organized help. Big, hearty Manager Fulton, of the Cambria works, for himself and on behalf of his company, labored with the rest. The ministers of the town spared themselves not in giving aid and consolation. The Catholic religious forces, organized by Bishop Phelan, toiled without ceasing. Sweet-faced nuns, calm-eyed Franciscan and Benedictine sisters, through light and darkness, spent themselves in their holy offices of charity. An army rose up, and rushed in to offer comforting word and do helpful deeds. But so much, oh, so much, was needed. Want was everywhere, want for everything — food for the starving, clothes for the naked, medicine for the sick, surgical appliances for the injured, shelter for the homeless, coffins for the innumerable dead. Coffins! coffins! By the wagon load and car load, by hundreds and thousands, they came, and still, "Send us coffins, that we may bury our dead," was the appeal that went forth. Think of it! begging for thousands of coffins.

The tents of the Pennsylvania Militia were sent as sheltering places. Governor Foraker sent Adjutant General Axline, with nine hundred more canvas houses. The physicians of the town, and those who hurried to re-enforce their insufficient ranks, were indefatigable in striving to meet the demands for their services. Noble men, grand women, kind hearts, willing hands, untiring feet, were plentiful, but the want, the misery, the suffering, the utter destitution — these were mountains, and the laborers seemed like moles burying at their base.

Morgues were established in churches, sheds, workshops, school-houses, any buildings of size, sufficiently secure and undamaged for such use. Thousands thronged these charnel-houses to try to find their dead. They went from one to the other. For every corpse identified and taken away six were carried in. The anxious watchers flocked in crowds, men, women and children continually passing through the rows of awful bodies; and, when recognition comes, the wail of agony that breaks from them who watched and hoped and dreaded until that moment of terrible certainty, the cry of grief-stricken lamentation that rises on the solemn stillness, is heart-rending; the language of pathos is too weak for adequate description of the anguish. Some could not grieve.

"That's Emma," an old man said. He spoke with seemingly cool indifference. Emotion was exhausted within his breast. It was the fifth of his dead children that he had identified.

"Mamma! mamma!" wailed a little child. She had recognized a corpse, with limbs so distorted, with features so crushed, that naught but the instincts of the child of her bosom could have known it.

In the central dead-house in Johnstown proper, there lay two rows of ghastly dead. To the right, were twenty bodies that had been identified. They were mostly women and children, and they were covered with such wrappings as were procurable; a piece of paper, bearing the name, was pinned at the feet. To the left were twice twenty corpses of unknown dead. The building had been a school-house, and the

desks were used as biers. Three of the former pupils lay on desks they probably sat at in life.

William Huffman, well known to all in Johnstown, was drowned, and so were twenty-nine of his family. The eight-year-old daughter of Mrs. C. H. Huffman was saved. The little one besieged the morgue: "Oh, mister; do please tell me if my mother is here. I want to see her. I am Lizzie Huffman; all my brothers and sisters are gone — down the river, and my mother."

Poor little Lizzie's mother was not found.

David John Lewis, on the morning of May 31, 1889, was worth sixty thousand dollars. On the Sabbath of which we write, he owned a horse, and the clothes upon him — these were all. But wealth gone was nothing to him. From morgue to morgue he rode, and along the river bank he galloped continually, pausing to ask those who would listen, "Where can I find my sisters?" then hurry away, never waiting for reply. In the wild flood, he lost five near relatives — his sisters; one was married, and her little son and her babe perished with her. He dearly loved them all. Grief had crazed him.

A woman came to search. Her lips were smiling, and she was singing, singing amid such scenes as these. Suddenly she became quiet, then burst into a frenzied fit of weeping, and tore her hair and rent the few rags remaining of her dress.

"I shall go crazy," she screamed, "if they do not find his body." Poor soul, her madness was at climax already. "He was a good man," she murmured:

"He was a good man. I loved him, and he loved me." She smiled at that remembrance.

"Where is he?" she screamed. "I must find him!" And she darted out, down toward the river. Some men caught her; she struggled desperately for a few moments, and then fainted. Her name was Eliza Adams; she had been married two months before to a foreman of the Cambria Works. He was drowned.

Bartine was a watcher for what might be "his dead," in this hall of horrors.

A corpse was carried in, he saw the face of a woman, the hair, matted with mud, fell in yellow, heavy masses from the head. His blood seemed to solidify in his veins. The bearers laid the body down. He pressed forward to view it. From a mass of ruins on the river bank they had taken this corpse. A beautiful girl this had been; tall and slender, of well-rounded form, clad in a long, red wrapper, with lace at throat and wrists. The feet were encased in pretty embroidered slippers. The face was a study for an artist. Features clear cut as a cameo, and violence had spared all marks of disfigurement, as though loath to mar such charms. A smile was on her lips. Beautiful she was, even in death.

"Does any one know her?" was asked of the group that gathered around. No answer! The fair form, the sweet face, is in the grave of the "unidentified."

It was not Leo, thank God! But the last shock was too much for Bartine, and he left the place.

He walked to the depot where more bodies lay awaiting recognition and burial. A woman of magnificent presence brushed hastily by him. She lifted the

paper coverings from off the faces of the corpses lying there. She bared the face of one, a woman, young and beautiful. With a cry of anguish the searcher reeled backward, and was caught by Bartine. In a moment she recovered herself, stood unsupported, and gazed, dry-eyed and speechless, on the features of the cold, still clay. Then came another terrible outburst of grief, and after that she said, to the air about her: "And her beautiful hair all matted, and her sweet face so bruised and stained with filth!" The dead woman was her sister. The body was coffined, and she went with it to her desolated home.

"Oh! sir, sir!" a pale-faced woman asks, her words thick with sobs: "can you not give me a coffin to bury my little boy's body?"

"Do you know," asks a tottering old man of a neighbor he meets there, "whether they have found Jennie and the children?"

"Jennie's body has just been found at the bridge, is the answer; "but the children can't be found."

Jennie was the old man's widowed daughter, and was drowned, with her two children, while her father was in Cambria Mills.

A mother recognized the corpse of her baby boy, swept away in its cradle. "Watch over it a few minutes," she asked Bartine. She went away; soon she returned with a little white casket. Then she hired two men to carry it to the cemetery. No hearses, no train of carriages for funerals now, in Johnstown. The dead were found, a coffin of any kind procured, then to the graveyard. A priest, a minister, perhaps, if one could be found that had a moment unoccupied by

a hundred duties; if not, a prayer, the bitter tears of sorrow, then fill in the shallow grave, and go away—away where? Few, very few, had a home to go to.

Bartine found not what he sought, yet feared to find, in such a place. He started in another direction. He asked his way of a man who was gazing, in an apathetic mood, upon a spot where stood the remains of a home. The desired information was given, and the man still talked on:

"She stood right thar, sir," he said, pointing to the roofless ruins. "She climbed up thar on the roof when the water first came and smashed the house. She had baby in her arms. Then another house came down and dashed against ours, and my wife went down, holding the baby up, raised above her head. I saw it all from a tree over thar, and I couldn't move hand or foot to help 'em. Yes, sir, I saw 'em both go down."

It was to the Fourth Ward School-house Morgue the colonel had asked to be directed. He had heard some one mention the name of such a place, and the impulse came upon him to visit it.

He found it. Little it differed from all others he had been in.

The same terrible arrangement of the dead, in rows, side by side. Some of them stained and blood-bespattered, swollen and disfigured, while others were smiling as placidly as though pleased with the sudden and rough solution of life's problem. One little lad's face bore upon it the expression of a child that is about to burst into tears; on a man's face, close beside, was stamped a look of agony and horror that spoke the inexpressible language of the soul while

He felt a clutch upon his arm and turned quickly.

struggling with death. Many were bodies of Catholics, and around their necks hung religious emblems. The attire and features of some showed them to be of those poor in this world's goods, and toilers; yet there were many bearing outside evidences of culture, refinement and prosperity.

Bartine never glanced at the dead children or men. He looked at the drowned women, to see if golden hair was about the face or crowning the head. By that sign he should first know her.

Leo was not there. Not yet.

He walked, unnoticing, past a man standing at the head of a corpse. He felt a clutch upon his arm, and turned quickly.

Jack Adams stood there, silent, and pointing with his hand to the body before him.

Bartine looked. Straight, composed in feature and in form, with no disfigurement of feature, there lay all that remained of a man who for years, under his own eye, had done his full duty to his God, his country, and his fellow-man, who had risked life with fearless gallantry on many a bloody battle-field, and never shirked a danger or flinched from meeting foe.

Captain George Randolph, comrade and friend. Gone, drowned and picked up out of a ditch. 'Twas hard! It was an awful death for a soldier to die. But he'll take his place in line, and hold his rank, as will every good soldier, in the camp, "on the other shore."

The colonel held out his hand, the sergeant grasped it; all rank was leveled before death. They went out together.

"Sergeant, it is terrible. We must take him away and see to his burial."

"Maggie is attending to all, sir. She knows just where to go, and who to go to. She'll find his people, if any are alive here. The little girl is with her. Mrs. Randolph and the other daughter is at Altoona. I will start Maggie, with Rose, there by the first train. I will attend to all I can; Maggie will do the rest."

The colonel took out his wallet, and gave Adams several fifty dollar notes.

"Spend that and more to send the body to his wife. I did not know her. I *knew* the little girl would be safe with you. The boy, his son, do you know of him?"

"He's gone, sir. No doubt of it. Ground to pieces or burned or burning in that infernal raft at the bridge. I've traced him up close, and feel sure he was carried in there."

"Awful! awful! As noble a boy as ever I saw in my life."

"He was that, sir. He had the making of a soldier in him, if ever boy had."

"And his poor mother!"

"Don't talk of it, colonel, don't talk of it: I can't stand it! I'd sooner fight the whole war over, land battles and sea-fights, all in one, than go through a siege like this."

"Adams, how soon can you arrange about—about this?" and he waved his hand toward the building. "How soon? and then come here and meet me. I need your help badly, very badly, to search for a lady I must find, alive or dead."

"Can you give me an hour, sir?"

"Yes, will an hour be time enough for all you will have to do?"

"I only have to see Maggie, sir."

"Then find her, and meet me here in an hour."

"I'll be here, sir."

Sorrow for his comrade, a gleam of hope for Leo, now that he had thus gained such efficient aid, mingled strangely in Colonel Bartine's bosom.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHANCE MEETINGS.

JACK ADAMS started off to find Maggie and put upon her strong, willing shoulders the work he knew that she could so well perform.

He had, after many bitter remarks on her part, made his peace for reappearing without any report of Leo. But he assured both Maggie and little Rose, that the young lady must be all right, as she was in care of Colonel Bartine, and that so soon as he met that gentleman, he would have news of their Miss Leo. His skill and experience in patching up a shelter, came well into play here, and in two hours, with the plentiful material at hand, he had rigged up a most cozy shanty, foraged for furniture, found dry, good bedding, and a little crib for Rose, turned up more rations from the ruins of a grocery, brought in a cook stove still serviceable, and made things so trim that Maggie declared she was perfectly satisfied. She allowed those strangers who had come to her, to drift away; they

were welcome to come back and share what she had, but her heart was heavy for the little child, so unnaturally quiet, so worn, so piteous in her longings for "papa." The great-hearted girl wished to devote herself to Rose, for she could see that the little flower was fading fast, and it racked her soul with misery.

She had ordered Adams away to find some word of Captain Randolph. As Jack hurried back with the money, his news, and to consult her on the sad duties she was to undertake, he met her; or rather heard her voice in the midst of a small group of people, saw her arm upraised and a quart can flourshed over her head. He hastened to her side.

"Mr. Adams!" (Maggie was always formal befor people,) "will ye plase put in a word, and anything else that's needed here. This thief of the world would be charging thirty cents a pint for milk, and our poor babies starving to death for a sup." Then indignation got the best of her politeness. "Jack! Murder the bla'gard for me!" she said.

Sailor Adams, Sergeant Jack, put on his war paint. He snatched the long-handled tin dipper from the man. His face said "Free trade and Sailors' Rights;" or, otherwise, "free milk for Johnstown's babies!" He took the can from the girl, filled it to the brim. "Miss Armstrong, will you please wait three minutes while I play commissary-sergeant here?" Then he took the varied vessels of those around him and filled each one, and sent his strong voice sounding out, "Milk! milk! Free milk here!"

The owner ventured a faint expostulation.

"Avast there! Belay yer jaw, ye lubber! Ye're

too fresh — fresher'n yer milk is, a bloody sight! Don't back-talk me, or I'll salt ye, and rub the brine in well!" and Jack give the fellow a shove aside with his elbow, ladled out the milk to the crowd that gathered in a wonderfully short time, and, when it was all gone, tossed the dipper to the avaricious peddler, gave him one look of defiance and contempt, and then joined Maggie, to tell his sorrowful story.

Amid her sobs and tears, she said: "I feared 'twas so with the captain. He wasn't the man to be kept away from his family while life was in him. God rest him! he was the good man. God comfort his wife and childer! and little Rose; she was core-of-his-heart to the captain; and poor young George, I felt sure that he was gone. God! but it's terrible! Not a word out of your mouth, or sign from your eye to Rosey about this, Jack; she'd die before us that instant."

"She ought to have a doctor see her, Maggie."

"Doctor, is it! And are you to come telling me my duty to my baby, Jack Adams? Wasn't I keeping my eyes open for one? and I spied him this morning, the same ould doctor tends them always, apickin' his way over the piles. 'Rosey, darlint,' says I, 'lay quiet without me for a minute. I see a friend of yours,' and I bolted after him. He wasn't for coming at first — hadn't a minute for nobody, but says I, 'I'm Maggie, sir, that lives at Captain Randolph's, and his little Rosey's in my mansion beyant, and she's dyin', the darlint, and ye'll come see her immediately at wanst,' says I, and he come. Faith, I'd a'dragged him there by the hair of his bald head, hadn't he come peaceable. He's a decent man, after all, Jack, dear."

"And what did he say?"

"Nothing there; but he was kind and gentle as a mother, God bless him, to the poor little one, and, when I went outside with him, he says, 'She's had a terrible shock, and she's starved, body and soul. Get her to her mother, where she can have quiet and good food, and mebbe she'll pull through,' and he went off. But, oh, Jack! Jack! I'm misdoubting, I'm misdoubting she'll ever see her mother again."

Maggie's tears and sobs interrupted her for a time. Then she asked, "And did your colonel tell you nothing of Miss Leo?"

"I didn't ask him; we hadn't time to talk much; we were so broke up about finding the captain's body. But I'm to meet him again right away."

"Off wid ye, then, ye rattle-headed gossoon; to think o' ye forgetting to ask about Miss Leo, when ye know the heart in me's broken for word of her. Off wid ye, and don't let me see yer face until ye have news of her. See, Jack, dear, don't mind my hasty words; I'm that fretted I don't know what I'm saying."

"That's all right, Maggie. There's the money the colonel sent," and he gave her the notes. "We leave it all to you. We know you'll do the best you can."

"That I will, Jack; but what can one poor girl do against a world of misery. Don't be fooling yer time away here. Go! go! God stand betwixt ye and harm, for it's a true man ye are, Jack Adams. Now go."

Colonel Bartine, in front of the morgue, was considering how he had best employ the hour's interval before Adams rejoined him. He concluded to remain close there, thinking it probable the sergeant would be

back before that time elapsed. He saw two men coming toward him. One he recognized as a doctor to whom he had been introduced by Captain Randolph as the family's physician. He stopped him.

"Excuse me, sir. I was introduced to you, casually, by my friend Captain Randolph, while I was on a visit here, about a month ago. Bartine is my name; as Colonel Bartine he introduced me."

"Yes! yes! I remember — or think I remember. Did you know the captain's family?"

"I never was at his house, sir; business called me away the night I had engaged to visit him at his home. His boy I met at his father's office; a fine lad. I fear he is lost. The wife I never met; his youngest little girl, a sergeant of our old regiment, who was with me in the river here, saved from death, and she is with a trusty girl, their servant."

"I saw the child not an hour ago. She is in a bad way, a very bad way; she should be at once taken from this place to her mother, who is safe."

"I have sent to have that done, with all speed possible, sir," said the colonel.

"I'm glad of it; she can't be taken home to her mother too soon. I can hear nothing of the captain, and here is a gentleman from Philadelphia who wishes to find the family, and has come to me for information. Let me introduce you. Mr. Davitt, Colonel Bartine, I think you said?"

Bartine bowed; then, in low tones, told the two: "Captain Randolph's body is laid out in that building. I have sent Sergeant Adams to arrange that it be given over to any of his family that may be living."

"You are a friend indeed, sir!" said the doctor.

"I can see that you will do all that is required. Poor Randolph, he was a fine fellow! But I must be going, colonel, we doctors have fifty-six hours' work to do in every day, these awful times. This is a strange chance meeting, all around, this morning. The living, the dying, and the dead, friends and relatives, all of one family. Strange chance, indeed! But I must be moving. Do you go further with me, Mr. Davitt?"

"Stop, one moment more, doctor," said Bartine, as he stepped close to the physician. "Have you — have you any cases of dementia, of partial lunacy, among your patients?"

"Any! Why, man, half the people left in this valley are crazy! It is a wonder to me that any are sane. If I could find time to think, or take into my heart what my eyes see every moment, I should be a raving maniac. Crazy! Half of the people here are stark mad, and the other half nearly so."

"I asked, because, there is a lady, she was rescued from the river with Captain Randolph's child, she was in my charge, she suddenly became demented and escaped from me. I'm *very* anxious to find her. She was governess of Randolph's daughter."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the doctor, "this is really wonderful, even in these days of wonders; this Miss Schombert, I knew her, a noble woman, a beautiful girl, somewhat too sympathetic, over-conscientious, too acutely delicate, a noble young woman, sir! I am sorry, very sorry I don't know where to find and help her. I have heard nothing of her, but will keep

a sharp look-out. If you find her, send at once for me. She always interested me deeply. And, by George! what was I going to say? Oh! this gentleman, Mr. Davitt, only wanted to find the Randolph family so as to see or hear of this same young lady. You and he had better consult. Hope to see you both again under happier circumstances. Gazam is my name, Doctor Gazam. Good day, good day!" and the worthy doctor made all possible haste to be off to his hard work.

The colonel turned to Mr. Davitt, who evidently intended to accost him. He was a rather young, thin, long, carefully dressed gentleman, this Mr. Davitt; painfully affected by the soiled condition of his boots and trousers at the present time. With a smile that spread wide a very large mouth, and showed beautiful white teeth, he advanced a step toward Bartine, and held out his hand.

That strangely constituted individual merely bowed, and with icy dignity. He resented the thought that any one but himself should be seeking Leo. He would give all the many thousands he owned, and all he ever hoped to possess, to gain news of her safety, to have her once more in his care, yet, to his peculiar mind, it seemed to belittle her and himself to talk of her, to discuss her, to speculate of her whereabouts, to speak of her present condition to any one, unless it were Jack Adams, worthy of the most sacred confidences; or a doctor, professionally consulted. And he felt, too, that all other men would look on him with contempt did they know how he had twice lost her, and there was something very like jealousy in his

heart against any man who would face such discomforts to see her. A strangely mixed character was Colonel Bartine; his return to Mr. Davitt's polite salutation was almost rude.

"My dear Colonel Bartine," said the other; "I am delighted to meet you. I have heard your name frequently of late mentioned by the ladies of Mr. Schombert's family, in Philadelphia. I called there quite often lately, to talk of Miss Leonora, the daughter of the late Mr. Schombert. They promised to write to her, and have her appoint a time when I could visit her here, at the house of Captain Randolph. I am *extremely* anxious to see her. I suppose this terrible, terrible — er — convulsion of nature has prevented her answering their letter, and I was so *extremely* anxious to see her that I came here, in this horrible place, risked my life, you know, to find her. It's awful! this — this — er convulsion of nature, as I said before. Horrible, ain't it? Do you know where I can find Miss Leonora?"

"I'd give all I have in the world if *I* knew where to find her," answered Bartine, gruffly; he hated this man, and his eyes gleamed with rage as he looked on him, his dainty white necktie and neatly brushed hat and coat.

"Report for duty, sir!" The colonel turned to see Sergeant Adams salute and stand "at attention."

"Wait a moment or two, sergeant!" while I go in here and tell them to care for the captain's body until it is sent for. Probably they can have it embalmed. And Bartine turned his back on staring Mr. Davitt, and entered the morgue.

"Well, 'pon my soul!" said Mr. D., to Jack, "this Colonel Bartine has a most abrupt manner; rude, I might say; I heard that he was a most courtly gentleman."

"Who says he ain't!" snapped Jack, his fighting blood up in a moment. "There ain't a finer gentleman or better soldier on earth than Colonel Edward Bartine. I fought under him, and I know!"

"I daresay, I daresay! But his manner is strange. I addressed him politely, asked him a civil question about a person I am *extremely* anxious to see, and he gave me no answer that was an answer, and glared at me as though he would break my neck."

"Did he *say* he would *do* that?" asked Jack, with something very like a grin.

"No! no! He said nothing of that kind, but he *looked* it."

"Well!" replied Jack, "when he *says* it, you look out! for you can bet your life he'll do it. Break it short off, too!"

"Oh, come now! We're not enemies, at war with each other now. Such things ain't done these times!"

"Colonel Bartine is a man of his word, and, if he don't care to bother with you, all he's got to do is to pass the order to me, and *I'd* do it, quick'r'n jerk a lan'ard. Yes, *sir!*"

"God bless my soul!" said astonished Mr. Davitt.

"Maybe He will, and maybe He'll do 'tother thing for your soul," said Jack, who overheard the exclamation. "But you look out for your neck with Colonel Bartine. Here he comes!"

"Now, sergeant!" and the colonel came hurriedly up.

"Yes, sir! all ready!"

"Come on with me, then!"

He gave no glance, seemingly no thought, to the motionless Philadelphian; but Jack turned his head to bestow upon that gentleman a wink of solemn warning and terrible meaning.

Then the two soldiers hurried away, the sergeant close as possible to his colonel, giving strict attention to the explanations, suggestions and orders poured into his ears.

CHAPTER XX.

LITTLE ROSE IS TAKEN HOME.

THE sergeant listened closely to all that was said to him. The colonel at last paused for breath, and Jack halted.

"It seems to me, sir, that it wouldn't be any waste of time for us to take Maggie's opinion about this affair. She has a deal of hard sense, that girl has; she knows the ways of the young lady, for she thinks the world of her." He looked around. "The shanty that she rigged is just down here; it wouldn't take five minutes, and I guess it'll pay for the time and trouble!"

"A good idea, sergeant; let us go see her."

They soon entered the room, made by piled-up boards. Maggie was sitting beside the small bed, holding the child's hand in her own, and talking in low, soothing words to the sad little one, who looked, quiet and patiently, into her face.

Jack bustled around as much as space would permit,

and talked fast. He introduced the colonel to Miss Armstrong, and Bartine gave to her a bow such as a grandee of Spain might make before his queen.

"This is the gentleman, Miss Rose, that took you and the young lady out of the water. It's Colonel Bartine; he was your papa's colonel in the war, he is your friend, and has come to see you!" Jack spoke with all the cheer he could muster.

"I am very much obliged to you, sir, for taking Miss Leo and me out of that awful water," said the little girl, with childlike simplicity, and the politeness of good breeding. "If you see my papa, won't you please tell him I am here, waiting for him to come. Tell him his Rose is here, waiting for him."

So quiet, so patient, she was.

"Yes, dear, I'll tell him when I meet him." The words choked in Bartine's throat.

"Oh, then he will be sure to come — sure to come," and there were tones of gladness in the whisper.

"But Maggie is going to take you to see mother and sister and the rest, Miss Rose; so you must get up, and be strong, and you'll soon see all of them."

"Mamma, sister, brother?" she said, "and papa, too — but I will see papa first, won't I?"

It was a moment, only a moment, the pause in giving reply, a moment, while they all had to gulp down the sobs that rendered them speechless.

But it was enough. Her frightened eyes glanced quickly from one sad face to the other. A despairing, wailing cry came from her lips:

"Papa is dead, I know it — papa is dead; my poor papa, my poor, dear papa!"

"*Agnus Dei, miserere nobis,*" moaned Maggie, "Lamb of God, have mercy upon us! My Rose, my darling, core of my heart, don't spake like that; don't look like that. Ye're papa's in Heaven, darlint, looking down on ye this minute, waiting there for ye. Rosey, darlint, I'll take ye to yer mamma and sister if I have to crawl wid ye in me arms; I'll crawl on me knees wid ye to them. Rose! Rose! spake to me, darlint. Cry with yer eyes, my sweet!"

"Mamma and sister — not brother, not papa. Brother is gone with papa, then? Poor brother — but oh, I want my papa." Tears were falling fast; the eyes of the little one alone were dry.

"*Agnus Dei, miserere nobis,* Lamb of God have mercy upon us," again moaned Maggie; "*Kyrie eleison,* Lord have mercy upon us. *Christe eleison,* Christ have mercy upon us. Holy Virgin, Mother of Christ, have pity on us."

"Maggie!"

"What is it, lamb, my precious one?"

"Ask him — papa's colonel — if Miss Leo is — gone — too." The words were whispered, but were heard.

Maggie turned her haggard face to the men, her eyes, unnaturally bright, with dark rings, that told of trouble and sleeplessness, about them, asked the question. She stifled a groan, when Jack laid his finger on his lips, and mournfully shook his head.

Another one was gone, another of her loved ones gone forever.

"Miss Leo is safe, darling," she said; "you will see her again."

"I'm glad Miss Leo is safe, she was so good to me always."

"Shall I go for a doctor," murmured Jack, close to Maggie's ear. The quick senses of the child caught the question.

"I don't want a doctor, I'm not sick — I'm only tired. I don't want — anybody — but papa."

"My lamb, my lamb! If I could bring him to ye by shedding my heart's blood, I'd do it. But I can't, my precious one, I can't. He's watching over you, though, Rosey; he's watching you from out of Heaven, dear."

"I know he's waiting for me; he wants me, my papa does."

"*Agnus Dei, miserere nobis.*"

"Maggie!"

"Yes, my heart, I'm here, what is it, what can I do for ye?"

"Tell mamma, Maggie, and sister, I'm sorry I won't see them. I feel, I know, I'm going to papa and brother. Tell all I love them; tell Miss Leo I love her; but papa is waiting, he wants me. I must go to my papa. Kiss me, Maggie."

"Oh Christ! have mercy upon us. My child is dead, my child is dead!"

Dead! yes! The gentle heart was broken. But all was rest now. Beautiful in its peace, a smile was on the lips. The little bud was already opening in the sunlight of a land where there is no more sorrow, no more pain, no more parting.

Rose was with "papa" forever.

Another little coffin, another little mound of earth, would hide her frail form, but her soul was where it longed to be, her spirit was already wafted across the vast, unknown sea that rolls around this world, and gently floated to the shores of Heaven. It entered to find rest in the sheltering arms of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me;" to find "papa" waiting there.

Little Rose had reached home.

CHAPTER XXI.

ADRIFT ONCE MORE.

SORROW must wait upon necessity. Aid was called for distracted Maggie, and assistance secured until she was sufficiently recovered to attend to the last sad offices for her lost darling.

The two men started out once more in search of the unfortunate Leo, to find her, if living; to obtain her body if she were dead.

They had not gone far before Bartine stopped: he shut his eyes and put his hand before them.

"Sergeant," he said, "I am dizzy, weak and faint. I am starving, though I feel no hunger, and suffer no pain. I have eaten nothing for — how long — when was it I last tasted food? I must eat, or I shall have no strength for what is before us."

'I thought you looked like it, sir. I would have offered you of our rations in the cabin there — I've been eating with them, what I could pick up, and we've

had enough, such as it is; but I couldn't, I couldn't think of it then, and I can't go back now, and see that poor girl in her misery; see that little one — there, as she is, I couldn't, if my father was starving before me, face that again; not right off."

"A crumb from there would choke me!" answered the colonel. "It would bring back all — that, and we must forget it, shut it out of our eyes and mind, until this work is over."

"I know a place up on the hill where we can get a meal, sir. It was pointed out to me this morning. I'm sure I can find it."

He led the way to a house on the hillside, above the line of the flood. A woman was there; would that we knew her name. The people of that house were evidently in poor circumstances, but they *gave* freely of what they had. Here Bartine and Jack made a hearty meal off roughest food.

"How much, madam?" the colonel asked, when he could eat no more.

"Oh!" replied the woman, she was more than "a lady," she was a true, great-hearted woman. "We don't charge anything in times like these. You see, I went out and spent ten dollars for groceries, at a place that wasn't washed away, right after the flood, and we've been living on that ever since. Of course we don't ask any of the relief, not being drowned out. You are welcome to all we can give."

May her cruse of oil never fail, and her barrel of meal waste not, and may the Lord ever give her full abundance!

Bartine laid down a note of twenty dollars. "You

will find others to feed, madam; use this in your noble charity."

He stood, hesitating for a moment which way to go, all ways were equally uncertain, all offered the same faint chances of success.

Out upon the air came a plaintive song, in delicious strains of soft legato. The strange sound arrested their attention at once. Who could sing surrounded by such horrors as were all about them there? The music was weird, strange, unnatural, yet how sweet. The words were plain to the listeners. They were words of sorrow, the voice pulsated with grief. If song were sung there, this well fitted the time and situation:

"The clouds fast gather,
The forest oaks roar;
A maiden is sitting
Beside the green shore.
The billows are breaking with might, with might,
And she sighs aloud in the darkling night,
Her eyelids heavy with weeping."

Bartine stood transfixed; the power of motion had left him. He knew that voice, but it seemed to come from above, from the circumambient atmosphere. Leo was singing those words, but he began to think they were wafted to him alone, from above. He looked at his companion, who was equally astonished and affected with himself, but was also watching his face with wonder, not unmixed with alarm, at its strange expression.

Again came the song-strain:

"My heart's dead within me,
The world is a void;
To the wish it gives nothing,
Each hope is destroyed.
I have tasted the fullness of bliss below,
I have lived, I have loved; thy child, Oh, take now,
Thou Holy One, into Thy keeping."

The words seemed to die away in sobs. He knew it all then. They were the words of her favorite Schiller, "The Maiden's Lament;" he had heard her sing it before, at her father's house; the music was of her own arrangement.

Quickly he re-entered the house; by a violent effort he controlled his agitation.

"Madam," he said, speaking low to the woman; "I heard some one singing, while I stood outside your house. Have you any one staying with, visiting you?"

"It is a poor girl who is out of her mind. She wandered in here last night, so tired, and so frightened. She is a lady, and a beautiful one, but, poor soul, she is in a terrible condition, and seems to be in fear all the time."

"I think I know the lady, madam. She is rather tall, and has a great mass of golden hair?"

"Yes! yes! That's her. I've seen her about here for months, in Johnstown, and driving about, children with her. I could not but take her in; there are some terrible men about. I had to coax her hard, though, to get her to stay. She thinks, sometimes, that some man is after her, and then again she will cry, and call for Rose. She made me promise to hide her, before she would consent to stay, and I told her she might lock herself in the little back room there. She won't let even me in now; won't even open the door to let me pass food in to her. I do hope some of her friends will come hunting her, and I hear of it, for I can't leave here, and she will starve herself, I am afraid. Husband promised to tell about her as he goes around among people; that is the only chance we have to let

them know she is here, and safe. Strange she should take a notion to sing!"

Bartine could have taken that woman into his arms, he could have fallen down and kissed the hem of her tattered garment. He forgot his caution, his habitual reserve deserted him.

"'Tis Leo! 'tis Leo! I have found her!"

It was a momentary outburst; at once his usual self-command returned.

"This lady, that you have acted as an angel toward, Madam," he said, "is my special charge. Her name is Leonora Schombert. She was carried away by the flood, injured by a blow on the temple, and that, with the agony of the hour, the care of a little child, washed away with her, partially deranged her. She fears me now, though when sane she would implicitly trust me."

"She won't trust any one, not even me," said the woman.

"That gives you an insight into her state. I told you what I did, so that you could see I was really her friend."

"Oh, I can see that you are honest and good. I'd trust you with anybody," and she looked frankly in Bartine's tear-dimmed eyes.

"Thank you," he replied, "I will send my sergeant for a doctor, to try and find a doctor she knows; probably she will permit him to approach her."

He went out and gave directions to Adams — gave him money, telling him to hire men to hunt for Dr. Gazam, to spend any amount of money in finding him,

and to bring or send him to that house quickly as possible.

"Hurry! sergeant, hurry!" he said, "let nothing stop you in this!"

"I'm off, sir!" answered Jack. And he was off before the words were well out of his mouth.

Bartine could not command himself sufficiently to again go into the house, he walked to and fro, outwardly calm, but laboring under intense excitement.

Leo was there! She was again in his care. He would never part with her, never, never.

The minutes seemed hours. More than once he was upon the point of trying himself to induce Leo to see him, but he feared to make the attempt. The woman looked out of the door several times, evidently anxious to inquire further into matters, but he did not wish to enter into conversation with her, or any one, and he let this be seen by his manner. He would reward that good woman munificently, she should have anything and everything he could give her, but he could not talk with her now.

At last, at last! He saw them coming; Jack had found Dr. Gazam; no better scout in the world than Jack! and he was towing the worthy physician along at a rate that made the M. D. blow like a low-pressure steamboat.

They reached the house. The colonel hurriedly made all necessary explanations.

"I'm delighted to hear it, sir! delighted to hear it. She is a noble girl. I am glad to help her in this trouble," said the still panting doctor. "Let us go in."

The woman of the house was consulted. She first advanced to the door and knocked, knocked again. There was no answer.

Then she called "Miss Schombert!" still no reply; and then the doctor called, and tried the door. It was locked on the inside.

Bartine was well nigh crazy with suspense. He called the sergeant into the house.

"Stay here," he said, "and give help if any is needed."

Then he walked around to the back end of the building. The window was open; there were prints of small shoes on the soft ground. He raised himself by his arms, and looked in through that window.

The room was empty. Leo had escaped.

It flashed upon him, as he dropped to the earth, that in his one rare moment of undue exaltation, when he had shouted out her name, she had heard him. With that strange idiosyncrasy that leads the deranged so often to suspect and fly from those they best love when in mental health, she had, on hearing his voice, recognized it as that of the man she must shun.

The cunning of insanity prompted her to swift, quiet action. She opened the window, it was but a little fall, and all the time he had been waiting she was speeding away, away, anywhere to save herself from him.

Yes! Leo had escaped him again.

CHAPTER XXII.

NO QUARTER TO PIRATES.

MUTTERING curses upon himself and his stupidity, Bartine hurried with Jack toward a working party not far away. They had seen a girl come from the house, and move toward the river.

"I am afraid I have left my last chance go," he said, "I should have controlled myself and my voice, and not, like a fool, shouted so that all within half-a-mile range could hear me. Then, fool that I was, I neglected to watch outside that part of the building. In exactly the same way, through the window, she escaped the night before, and I must needs be looking for your coming with the doctor, as if my looking would hurry you any — and, in the mean time, she made her escape. Sergeant, I am no longer a sane, reasonable, thinking man! I am a poor fool!"

"Don't take on that way, colonel, you're worn out, that's what's the matter. We'll find the lady yet, I'm sure of it, even if she does throw herself in the river. There are so many about now, she's sure to be saved, and we are all the more sure to hear of her then. Come on, sir; lively motion is a fine cure for the horrors." Jack spoke bravely, but he was far from feeling the confidence his words implied.

They inquired of all they met. Some thought they had seen her, some said they had, but each told a different tale as to the way she was moving.

One man said: "I hope the poor lady won't go down the river banks toward Sang Hollow. Gangs

of the worst sort are down there, robbing the dead, stealing everything of value they can find, and committing all sorts of vile outrages. God help her if she falls into the hands of those drunken villains."

The two soldiers looked at each other in dismay. Here was a new terror. Their hearts grew cold as they contemplated it.

"And 'tis just the way she would most probably go," said Bartine, "back to the spot where we landed, where she last saw the child. These insane always retain some very acute faculties."

"Colonel, that's the road we had better take," said Jack, in a tone that showed that he shared his officer's convictions.

"Come! Away then!" and they dashed down the river bank.

Too true, most humiliating it is to human nature to record it, but true it is, that amid all the scenes of suffering and sacrifice, and heroism and generosity that was displayed in this awful time, there arose some of the basest passions of unbridled vice. The lust of gain led many skulking wretches to rob and despoil, and even to mutilate the bodies of the dead. Pockets were searched, jewels were stolen; finger and ear rings were torn away, the knife being often used on the cold body of the corpse to hurry the thieving. Against this savagery the better elements of the populace sternly revolted. There was as yet no organized government. But outraged and indignant humanity soon formulates its own code of laws. Pistol and rope and bludgeon, in the hand of honesty, did effective work. The reports of summary lynchings that at first

were spread abroad were doubtless exaggerated, but they had stern foundations of truth, and they had abundant provocation. Each hour revealed some new, horrible story of suffering and outrage, and each succeeding hour brought news of swift and merited punishment meted out to the fiends who dared to desecrate the stiff and mangled bodies in the city of the dead, and torture the already frantic victims of the cruelest of modern catastrophes.

On Saturday night a body, a dozen or more, of these thugs were noticed picking their way along the banks of the Conemaugh toward Sang Hollow. Suspicious of their purpose, several farmers armed themselves and started in pursuit. Soon their most horrible fears were realized. The villains were out for plunder. They came upon the dead and mangled body of a woman, lying upon the shore, upon whose person there were a number of trinkets of jewelry and two diamond rings. In their eagerness to secure the plunder, the thieves got into a fight, during which one of the number severed the finger upon which were the rings, and started on a run with his fearful prize. The revolting nature of the deed so wrought upon the pursuing farmers, who were by this time close at hand, that they gave immediate chase. Some of the gang showed fight, but, being outnumbered, were compelled to flee for their lives. Most of the brutes escaped, but four were literally driven into the surging river and to their death. The thief who took the rings was among the number of involuntary suicides.

This is only one story of the many similar.

Now came the information that the infernal work was again in prosecution.

"Death! far better death for her, than that!" Bartine muttered as he hurried forward.

It was still sufficiently light to distinguish objects some considerable distance in advance.

The colonel halted, the sergeant came up and busied himself a little time about the pile near which they stood. Soon he handed Bartine a spoke he had wrested from a cart-wheel: he held a like one in his own strong fist. Most serviceable weapons these, and neither man was otherwise armed.

"There's a crowd down there; they may be honest men, but we must get near enough to them unobserved, to see what they are doing."

"I see them, sir; plenty of cover here, we can stalk them walking, and be in amongst them before they spy us."

"Come on!" From one heap to the other they stole. The party they watched kept together, and seemed to be looking for something; often one would stoop down while the others stood aside.

"They may be honest, but I don't like their movements," said the colonel, as Jack joined him, and both hid behind a mass of rubbish.

"No more do I, sir; it's my opinion they're a set of bloody landsharks, and I'm aching to lay 'longside of 'em, and give 'em a volley."

"Quiet now, and careful, they might see us."

In a minute or two more they had covered considerable ground, and were again under shelter. They were now sufficiently near to see that villainy was at

work. Two wretches were searching the clothing upon a corpse; the others, some half dozen, gathered around, eager to see what would be found.

Suddenly, from the other side of them, out from some hiding-place, came a woman, clad in a white robe, with a glory of golden hair hanging about her. Fearlessly she advanced, with a most majestic air, until she stood out within their midst. Clear her voice rang out as she waved her hand:

"Murderers! Villains! Quit your accursed work and fly, or I will strike you dead!"

An instant of astonishment; then one burly ruffian, noticing the beauty of the face before him, gave a yell.

"Whoop! Here's my girl come to see me," and he tried to grasp her form, while another wretch started toward her with the same object.

She never quailed or moved a step, she faced them all, unflinchingly; her wild eyes looked lightning strokes. A second they faltered; one brute had her in his arms, but not long.

Bartine had attempted to spring out, at first sight of her, and all that is here related took place in less time than is required to tell it. Jack's hand had held back the colonel, while he whispered quickly, "You take the lady and rush with her to the house there; I'll attend to that crowd."

The next moment they were among the gang.

Leo had made no outcry, she struggled with the savage in silence.

Whack! How musically that stout club sounded against the fellow's skull. He fell like a log, carrying

Leo down with him. Bartine placed himself astride of her body, and took the first onslaught of the most of them. He rained his blows so thick and fast they had no chance to strike back. They tried to retreat. Jack Adams was at them, both flanks and rear; those who were not down turned to face him.

"Go! colonel! go!" he cried, laying about him, coolly, as though he were fighting flies with a fan. "Go! colonel! go!" and his club kept time to his song. Jack Adams hadn't forgotten the skill that made him best man at single-stick and cutlass-play on the old gunboat.

Donnybrook Fair fun it was for Jack; wherever he saw a head, he hit it. Though sorely hurt, the thieves depended upon numbers for final victory, and they fought hard.

Colonel Bartine saw a small posse coming, on the run, down the bank. He recognized the man who had warned him in the town. He was satisfied that Jack would have plenty of help, and he gathered the insensible form of Leo into his arms, and hastened to the house within view.

Down dashed a dozen honest fellows; the ruffians gave up hope then, and rushed away in all directions, all but two, one whom the colonel had stricken down, and one who had received a stunning blow from Jack. These two recovered their senses while being searched, and, as their pockets were emptied of their ghastly finds, the indignation of their captors was intensified, and, when a bloody finger of an infant, encircled with two tiny gold rings, was found in one fellow's pocket, a cry went up:

He gathered the insensible form of Leo in his arms and hastened to the house within view.

"Lynch them! Lynch them!"

A rope had been brought along by the posse. It was long enough to serve for two hangings. Without a moment's delay it was placed about the necks of the brutes, and they were dragged to a great tree near by. One fellow was still too stunned, or was too stolid to beg or struggle for life; the other, with blanched face and quaking limbs, shrieked and prayed and fought to escape.

But strong hands held him; the rope was over a limb. He called a name — "Jack Adams!"

"Who are you that calls me?" asked Adams, sternly.

"Oh, Jack! you know me!" and he gave his name. "I was in the army with you. Save me! Jack! save me! comrade!"

"Don't dare to call a soldier 'Comrade'!" answered Jack. "You lie if you say you were ever a soldier. You were in the army, yes. I know you! You were a thief, and a coward, and a deserter there, a bounty-jumper! You were drummed out of the army!"

"Save me! Jack! save me!" he entreated.

"Not me. I'd fight your whole gang again to save a cur dog's life, but you! I'd not turn my hand to save a thousand like you from hell. Go there! where you belong!"

He turned away and went toward the house to which Colonel Bartine had carried Leo. But as he went he heard the leader of the posse, call, "Pull now! boys! swing 'em off!"

And, as he reached the house on the hill, he looked

back, two bodies were swinging by the neck, from ropes tied to the limbs of a tree, in which same branches the night before were found entangled the dead bodies of a father and son.

"A queer world this," said Jack, casting his club away from him. "I oughtn't a have rated that fellow so rough when he was tied up, and scared and couldn't show fight. But it riled me out of my head for him to claim to be a soldier, and to call *me* 'comrade.'"

"A queer world, this!" he said again, as he looked at the dim outlines of the two figures swaying in the air. All was quiet now, the posse had disappeared.

"At noon standing by a little angel, and seeing her spread her wings and flit to heaven; at night watching two brutes hang — their souls are in hell already. It's a queer world! But wasn't that just a gay fight while it lasted?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

"ONE TOUCH OF NATURE."

HOW JOYFULLY the pen turns from recording deeds of fiends, human only in form, to inscribing on fair paper the noble acts of generous hearts.

The civilized world was aroused by the stupendous catastrophe, wholesale death and immeasurable devastation in Conemaugh Valley.

Action followed instant on the telling of the fearful tale. From every quarter, every nook and corner of our land, came words of sympathy, and *solid* relief. No standing to question, "What is wanted?" The fact was realized that everything was wanted, and

everything poured in. It came, material aid and comfort did — in drops, in little thread-like streams, in narrow watercourses, in steady-flowing brooks, in swift mill-races, in bubbling creeks, in rapid rivers, in tumbling cataracts, in surging seas, in rolling oceans, came the deluge of offerings, in the name of common humanity.

" Let us," said our President, no crowned ruler," King, by the Grace of God," but a man " of the people, for the people and by the people"—" let us put about this dark picture of misery the golden border of charity," and all our nation hastened to gild such a framing.

The rich, of their plenty, gave plentifully. The poor, of their scanty store, deprived themselves, that they might swell the flood of charity. They gave, of their means, more than the wealthy. " It shall be counted unto them again." The Lord will repay them, with interest.

" And there came a certain widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

" And he called his disciples unto Him, and saith unto them : Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.

" For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she, of her want, did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Foreign rulers sent words of condolence, foreign nations sent money. Every city, every town, every hamlet in our land gave lavishly of all that they had.

Amidst the contributions from great cities, Chicago has shown its grand, open-hearted Western liberality.

In money alone it contributed $125,000 to the sufferers of Conemaugh Valley, and individuals hastened to devote their personal services. The names of these Chicago Samaritans cannot be secured, but the practical work they are doing, and the cheerful courage of those to whom they render aid, may be judged by a letter received from Dr. Rachel Hickey, who, while this book passes through the press, is still working, with her woman's heart and soul and body, to assist the distressed. Her letter is dated from Johnstown. She says:

"Our work has never been more satisfactory than within the last few days. We have called upon the committee organized to help us, and they have begun to respond by sending names of worthy and needy women. You may be surprised to learn that I have not made demands on them before. I had not the heart to do so, knowing what has been asked of nearly every woman in Johnstown. Women, like Mrs. Kennedy of Kernville, with thirty and forty neighbors in her house, have not much opportunity for outside work. They say truly that they are so tired that they can hardly remember their own names. Mrs. K. was very much interested, and after she becomes a little rested she will give generous help. Good 'Auntie Parks,' as everybody calls her, was 'so done out' that I had to find my way up-stairs in answer to her call when I rapped at her door-jamb, for the door itself was missing, as it is in most cases. She will put her thinking-cap on for me. And so the work is extending, or rather, being done more thoroughly.

"Dr. Ewing and I had our first little visit for enjoyment's sake alone last night, when we met and talked with Clara Barton. She agreed with me cordially that everything is being done here for the amelioration of these people as fast as circumstances permit. One thing she said and emphasized was admitted by us all, and this is that the people of Johnstown, those who really suffered, have never uttered one word of complaint. They have never spoken of their lack of such food as they have been accustomed to have, of their personal privations, or of their crowded condition, except to regret the inconvenience they caused their neighbors. The latter remark usually: 'We don't mind it.' They are so thankful for their lives that all else sinks into insignificance. They are willing to wait; they are sure everybody is going to do right by them; they thank us, both when we have something

and when we have nothing for them. She ended by saying: 'Their conduct is a noble lesson to every outsider who has been here.' Dr. Ewing and I have had not a few experiences to verify the above. In a week her manner of reaching the sensitive among these people will be something similar to ours. She has written and published an invitation to those who would like to come in contact with her corps of workers to send name and address only, and they will be visited by one of the twelve women who are to be assigned to that duty. We will be very glad to leave our little efforts in such efficient hands."

What lessons of resignation, what examples of helpfulness were taught in these days, by men and women, all unconsciously.

One of the workers in the mills of the Cambria Iron Works, was Patrick Downs. His wife and daughter, Jessie, fourteen years of age, were his treasures on this earth. Jessie was just blooming into maidenhood. Rare was her beauty, and lovely the sweetness of her disposition. Every fellow-workman of the father was her devoted admirer. She was in the mill on some errand when the flood struck the town, and no trace of her could be found for several days. Then, in the cellar of the ruined mill, a workman spied a little shoe protruding from a closely packed bed of sandy mud. In a few moments the body of Jessie Downs was uncovered. The men, thought to be hardened by such scenes, stood about with uncovered heads and sobbed like babies. The child had not been disfigured in the least, the features being composed as if in sleep.

The men gathered up the remains of their little sweetheart, and were carrying it through the town on a stretcher, when they met poor Patrick Downs. He gazed upon the form of his child, but never a tear was shed by him. He thanked God that there was no

evidence of any terrible struggle and suffering before death. He had, but a few minutes before, identified the body of his wife among the recovered dead. The mother and daughter were laid to rest in one grave on Grove Hill, and Patrick Downs turned to his work again, to help those who had suffered and lived.

About the most unsightly place in the ruins of Johnstown was the morgue in the Presbyterian Church. The edifice is a large brick structure in the center of the city, and was about the first church building of the place. About one hundred and seventy-five people took refuge there during the flood. After the first crash, when all within were every instant expecting another and preparing for death, the pastor of the church, Rev. Mr. Beale, began to pray fervently that the lives of those in the church might be spared. He fairly wrestled in prayer, and those who heard him say that it seemed to be a very death-struggle with the demon of the flood itself. No second shock came, the waters receded, and the lives of those in the building were saved. These people insist that this was all due to Mr. Beale's prayer. The pews in the church were demolished, and the Sunday-school room under it was flooded with the angry waters, and filled up to the ceiling with rubbish.

A circumstance so strange as to cause it to be claimed a "miracle," occurred at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, and has caused a great sensation in devout Catholic circles. The remarkable event is proven by most unimpeachable testimony. The devotions in honor of the Blessed Virgin, celebrated daily through the month of May, were in progress on

that Friday when the waters descended on Cambria City. The church was filled with people at the time, but when the noise of the flood was heard, the congregation hastened to places of safety outside. In a few minutes the church was partially submerged, the waters reaching fifteen feet up the sides, and swirling furiously around the corners. The building was badly wrecked, the benches were torn out, and in general the entire structure, both outside and inside, was fairly dismantled. When an entrance was forced through the blocked doorway, the ruin appeared to be complete. One object alone had escaped the wrath of the flood. The statue of the Blessed Virgin, that had been decorated and adorned because of the May devotions, was as unsullied as the day it was erected. The flowers, the wreaths, the lace veil, were undisturbed and unsoiled, although the marks on the wall showed that the surface of the water had risen above the statue to a height of fifteen feet, while the figure had, nevertheless, no mark or stain to show that the flood had ever touched it. Every one who saw or has seen the statue and its surroundings, is firmly convinced that the incident was a miraculous one; even the most skeptical admit that the affair savors much of the supernatural.

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin," said Shakespeare, that man of all knowledge; and never were his words more fully verified than when came this cry for help.

The millionaire in his royal mansion, the clerk at his desk, the laboring man in his cellar, in his yards, on his docks; the toiling, almost starving sewing-woman

in her cheerless garret; the newsboys, and bootblacks, who lived and lodged in city streets, all sent their offerings, great or little, to the stricken souls of Conemaugh.

Yes! and write it for those to read who would contend that prison walls hold men who are " all bad," the convicts from their cells contributed nobly.

Read what is written: When the convicts in the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania learned of the disaster through the weekly papers, which arrived on Wednesday and Thursday, the only papers they are allowed to receive, a thing that must seem incongruous to the outside world, happened. The criminal, alone in his cell, was touched with the same sympathy and desire to help his fellow-men in sore distress, as the good people who have been filling relief depots with supplies, and coffers with money. Each, as he read the story of the flood, would knock on his wicket and tell the keeper he wanted to give some of his money. The convicts, by working over and above their daily task, are allowed small pay for the extra time. Half the money so earned goes to the county from which the convict comes, and half to the convict himself. The maximum amount an inmate can make in a week for himself, is one dollar.

The keepers told Warden Cassidy of the desire expressed all along the lines of cells, that the authorities receive their contributions. The convicts can do what they please with their earnings, by sending it to their friends, and several had already sent small sums out to be forwarded to the Johnstown sufferers. The warden was willing to help the prisoners carry through

their warm-hearted desires. One hundred and forty-six convicts, gave five hundred and forty-two dollars and ninety-six cents. It would take one convict, working all his extra time, ten years to earn that sum.

There was an old man in that prison, a cripple, who had fifteen dollars to his credit. He said to the keeper: "I've been doing crooked work nearly all my life, and I want to do something square this time. I want to give all the money coming to me for them fellers out there at Johnstown." The warden, however, had made a rule, prohibiting any one man from contributing more than five dollars. The old convict, stubborn in his determination to "do something square this time," and to do it to the extent of his power, was told of the limit rule. "Then, look here!" he said, doggedly. "I'm going to send the rest of my money out to my folks, and tell them to send it to them fellers!"

"Charity covereth a multitude of sins," and surely, these convicts must have a credit placed in their favor on other books than those kept in the prison-office — on the books of the recording angel.

To give a list of the cities and towns that contributed to the "Johnstown Flood Sufferers" would be to print a roll longer than the postoffice list of these United States. To tell the amount of money subscribed and sent, would astonish even those who place their estimates at what they consider most extravagant figures. To attempt to classify and enumerate the thousands on thousands of tons of stores of every imaginable article required to meet the needs of destitute humanity, would require hundreds of volumes. To do justice, to give mention by name of the associ-

ations, organizations, societies, churches, schools, asylums, who expended the accumulations in their treasuries in relief, who sent their officials to aid, who threw open their doors to receive, would be impossible in this work; and to fitly honor the men and women, the soldiers, the police, the ministers, the priests, the doctors, the nurses, the thousands who toiled and thought not either of pay or thanks, words that pen could write would be weak, far too weak, to render the most infinitesimal fraction of the tribute they have earned. "Verily, they shall have their reward."

American energy, "pluck," can neither be washed out by water or consumed by fire. Johnstown and Conemaugh Valley will again, and quickly, rise from the ruins. The stunning effects of the terrible blow have passed away. Not many hours elapsed before means were adopted to clear the ground for rebuilding and resumption of business and the vast industries previously prosecuted there; and, with the lavish offerings of means and credit to those men of indomitable will, invincible courage, who before made that valley a noted hive of industry, enterprises far more grand, far more beneficial in their results, in giving means of earning honest livelihood and provision for old age to willing workers, industrial establishments far greater in extent, will soon be in existence and operation.

Every modern appliance has been brought into requisition in removing the mountains of *débris*. To some sensitive people the means employed, the apparent disregard of the dictates of humanity, may seem cruel, barbarous. But stern necessity knows no law. Dynamite, that terrible explosive, had to be used to

break up the vast, solidly-wedged mass of wreckage, and hundreds of bodies were blasted into atoms. Fire alone could clear certain spots of the confused masses piled upon them, and many, very many bodies were thus consumed.

Only one corpse of the heroic band that stood by Mrs. H. O. Ogle was ever found. It was that of Lineman Jackson. When the flood came he was on the office pole endeavoring to cut the wires, evidently realizing that the building would soon be submerged, and thinking that the wires might be made to work through if cut clear of it. His body was found two miles below Johnstown, "in harness," his climbers and belt upon him. But the fiends had been at work; his watch and papers were stolen. He lived at Derry, Penn.; but, in pursuance to orders, he was on duty at Johnstown on May 31, and doing his duty, he died. A widow and four children, dependent upon him for support, he left behind. Who will pension this family of the brave Jackson?

Mrs. Ogle and the rest of her noble crew were buried in the ruins of the office building. It and the wreck about it were necessarily fired in order to clear the ground, and the bodies of these brave women and gallant men were cremated on the spot where they yielded up their lives so grandly. It seems almost fitting that this should be so. Great conquerers in olden times were thus burned to ashes, on pyres of honor; these we reverentially name, were conquerors, indeed; conquerors over Death! Death sought to blot them out. It glorified them! Their names and deeds shall live forever.

This chapter, poor in expression as it is, gives food for thought; its facts strengthen and solidify one's belief and trust in the innate nobleness of one's fellow-mortals, in the existence of a real, true humanity in the men, a glorious womanhood in the women, of our land.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CLOUDS — BEFORE A SUNBURST.

A LOVELY day in June. It is nearly a month since that terrible Friday.

In an invalid's chair, upon a porch of one of those delightful houses, buried in a green nook, that are to be found near Philadelphia, is Leonora Schombert, well wrapped up, for the air is sharp, though bracing. Leo looks like the shadow of her former self; her pale face is beautiful, more than lovely in its whiteness, and strikingly pathetic in its expression of sadness, resignation and grief. Near her sits faithful Maggie Armstrong; the roses were quickly coming back to her cheeks, her indomitable spirit fully up to its normal pitch; her devotion to her mistress and friend was without limit or power of expression.

When Bartine had carried Leo to the house on the bank, after the attack on the pirates, he found shelter and assistance there. The good people aided him in securing the girl beyond all possibility of escape, and they gave her every attention then required. She recovered from her faint, but almost immediately lapsed into a sound, natural slumber, so remaining until near noon time of the next day. By one of those physiological

changes, or readjustment of functions, which often occur by accident or nature's own mysterious working, Leo, when she awoke from her long sleep, was perfectly sane; no trace of brain disorder was exhibited by her speech or action.

Delighted beyond measure, Colonel Bartine had found and consulted Dr. Gazam. The physician said that such things could and did occur, and, so long as they resulted happily, why should he try to explain. He visited Leo, and then gave his advice: "Take her away from here, to some place where she will have quiet and rest, every dainty in food, best attention, and no sight of mountains or water."

And so she was brought to the delightful suburb of the Quaker City, and loving care, and all that money could buy, were lavished upon her. But she grew strangely apathetic in a few days, and seemed totally indifferent to life. She was very grateful to those who ministered to her wants, and tried to anticipate her every need, but she lacked ambition, or desire, to recover, and gave no assistance to her naturally strong, healthy organization in building up.

Colonel Bartine had taken up his quarters at an hotel not far away. He was a constant visitor, but, truth to tell, not a particularly entertaining one. He was reclothed in body and mind, outwardly and inwardly, and looked the ideal of a soldier and officer out of uniform. But he had wrapped about him a double cloak of reserve. It must be remembered that he had never approached Leo as a lover or suitor. For a year or more he had not met her, until he grasped her in the flood. When he last saw her with

her step-mother's family she had been very cool toward him, had even seemed to avoid him, and now he feared to show the least sign of his interest, lest she might think that gratitude for her rescue, for the care he had taken of her, that gratitude demanded she should listen to his wooing. He would have no such aid, and he guarded his words and looks, and acted the part of one who only did good deeds to please his whims, and he played the *rôle* only too well.

The reader will understand how Leo regarded Bartine, but how could he know that he was her hero, the noblest man on earth to her? She had ever carefully guarded her secret, had shrunk from all that would seem to invite him, from every action that her ultra fastidious delicacy might construe into conduct unbecoming a modest maiden; and she had overacted her part.

Now she could recall that letter from her step-mother, telling her of the attentions paid Sarah by Colonel Bartine. She could also remember the letter, never answered, received from the same source, asking her to appoint a time for seeing Mr. Davitt. Leo did not know Mr. Davitt, and that gentleman evidently had said nothing to the step-mother of his reasons for desiring an interview. Since her arrival in or near Philadelphia, the Mrs. Schombert and her daughters (Leo never could call her mother) had persistently visited her and Colonel Bartine. They continually wrote him notes, asking him to call at their home in the city, and give his advice as to this or that situation offered Sarah or Kate, the employment never being accepted. In short, they persecuted the man, but he

endured them, and visited them from consideration of Leo and her father. He could not but tell Leo that he saw them often; he would not tell her why he went, or was made to go; that would betray his impatience and disgust; and the women, they visited her, and chattered, and wrote notes to her, and 'gushed' of Colonel Bartine and his visits to them. *They* could easily see that he was deeply interested in Leo, and they joined forces to win him from her, for Sarah or Kate, or the mother — he could take his pick, only so they got him and his money.

And Mr. Davitt called very soon, and then called very often, and had long conversations with Leo, and Mr. D. was quite shy of Colonel Bartine, and always hurried away when the soldier put in an appearance. The colonel gave Leo no opportunity to explain the visits of Mr. Davitt; though much about the house and grounds, he talked little to Leo. Once she mentioned Davitt's name, and the colonel rose and left with almost rude abruptness.

This was the state of the game of cross-purposes at that time.

Bartine certainly did hate, in fact was fiercely jealous of, Davitt; but he knew he had no right to entertain such feelings. He had never given Leo the least evidence that he loved her, and she had exhibited no partiality for him. The few words that she uttered when he held her on the raft in the flood, they could mean anything or nothing; she may even then have been wandering in her mind, and mistaken him for some one else — for Davitt perhaps. "Confound this Davitt!" he thought. "And I acted like a fool and

a boor and a cad toward him, that day in Johnstown. I must apologize!" And he did so. The next time he met Mr. Davitt, he stopped him; told him of the excitement, the mental and physical strain under which he labored when he met him first, and frankly begged his pardon. Now, Mr. Davitt, though peculiar in some ways, was a gentleman all through, and a man of pluck, too; though not drilled to repel sudden, unexpected attacks. He met Bartine's approaches like a true man.

"My dear Colonel Bartine, do not say one word more. We will never mention that little matter again. I am delighted, *extremely* delighted to meet you under circumstances where there are no, er — convulsions of nature, as I might say, to disturb the harmony of social amenities, and I am *extremely* anxious to have some conversation with you about Miss Leonora, she relies so upon ——"

"Stop! Mr. Davitt!" Colonel Bartine froze at once; he spoke in cold, hard tones; "you are making a great mistake, sir. I am not in Miss Schombert's confidence; I knew her father well, while he lived; he was one of the best of men. I saw his daughter, this lady, during her girlhood, and after. I had not met her for a year until I found her in trouble and afflicted, at Johnstown; the little I have done for her any *man* in the world would do, I would do, for any lady similarly situated. You have more conversation with Miss Schombert in an hour than I do in a week," he continued, bitterly.

"I am about her a great deal because I am staying here for — for my own health, just now. Miss Schom-

bert and you must settle your affairs between you. Excuse me; good-day!"

"What an *extremely* odd character that man is," thought Davitt, looking after him; "straight as a rifle-barrel, and loaded to the muzzle with contradictions and cranky notions. If I was peculiar as that man, by jove! I'd — I don't know what I'd do. But he's a gentleman, and a fine fellow. I wonder who makes his trousers? they set *extremely* well!"

Davitt was a fine fellow, and an honest man. He could not have been made to believe that his best friends considered *him* odd and "cranky."

And so, amid these complications, and little plottings of little minds, that the higher natures were unable to conceive of, and thus never imagined, clouds crept over the horizon bounding our hero and heroine, and both were discontented and unhappy.

Leo had heard all. She insisted upon it, and 'twas better to tell her than to let her mind dwell upon its own imaginings. Bartine gave all the glory to the sergeant, and the sergeant awarded every atom of praise to his colonel.

The death of little Rose was a great shock to Leo, but Maggie, who told her of it, had given way to such a violent outburst of grief that Leo was obliged to restrain her own emotion, and comfort the girl. This was well, and soon she seemed to reconcile herself to it. "It is better so," she said, thoughtfully, "her troubles are over; she is with the one she loved best on earth. She is happy now;" and she spoke as though she, too, would be glad of such rest and peace.

It was Sunday, early evening. Leo was dozing in her chair. She was half-conscious of some quiet movement near her. When she opened her eyes, Colonel Bartine sat in the rocker Maggie had occupied. The girl was gone about some duty elsewhere; the people of the house were all away, enjoying a ride.

Leonora gazed at her visitor for a little time without speaking; there was a strange light in her eyes, and a look of firm resolution on her face.

"I am glad you are here," she said. "I want to tell you — to ask you — something; may I?" She was very humble, somewhat frightened at him, at herself, at the task she had determined to perform.

"You may say anything to me, Miss Leonora," he replied, "except — about those — those bad times, you know, and gratitude; you owe all that to Sergeant Adams — nothing to me. I only deserve blame for my carelessness and stupidity, through which your sufferings and peril were so greatly increased."

"I am not going to annoy you with thanks, colonel." They were very formal in addressing each other. "I wished to tell you about Mr. Davitt; he ——"

"And I wish to hear nothing about Mr. Davitt; that is another subject I taboo!" quickly, even harshly, interrupted Bartine.

"But I must talk of him, it is so important, such a change of life I am thinking of — and I have no one but you to consult, to go to for advice," and her eyes filled with tears.

"I will listen to all you have to say. Go on!"

He braced himself, and took his nerves in hand, to face a terrible ordeal.

"Mr. Davitt," she began, "sent me word through my father's wife, that he wished to see me on a matter of great importance. The letter reached me just before that awful time, and I never answered it. He avoided all explanation to that family. He is a gentleman, though peculiar in some ways. He sought me here, and told me that which has caused me much thought as to my future, as to the action I should take. I have made up my mind, almost, at last; I only want a good friend, and you are the best friend I have, to indorse or approve my decision."

She paused as though waiting for some remark from him.

"Go on!" he said, through firm, set lips.

"I am going away, to another home, another life. I believe, I know, I would be happier, that I could make one lonely life more pleasant by my care and presence."

Bartine's face was very white, his heart was throbbing violently. She was going to marry Davitt, that prig! But he spoke not, moved not.

"My father," she continued, "had a sister and brother in Germany. He loved them, and they loved him, dearly. They never married, lived in the old homestead together, and grew very aged."

"What has all this to do with Davitt and marriage?" thought her auditor. He was puzzled.

"My aunt died a few weeks ago; she had much property in her own right. I was named for her, and, though she had not seen me since I was a very little child, I wrote to her often. She has left me all her property. My old uncle is alone in the world now,

and very feeble; he wishes me to come and live with him. He, too, is very wealthy. I almost wish he were poor, I could work for him — work brings forgetfulness — but, even as it is, I can comfort him, can care for his old age. I think it my duty to go; I want to go. America was a very bright home for me, while father lived, I was a very happy girl. But I think I could live more happily, or more contentedly, in the Father-land; there would not be so much to remind me of — many things. Mr. Davitt is a lawyer, he was written to by my uncle's attorneys, and it is this business that has caused our frequent, long consultations."

Edward Bartine, West Pointer, ex-colonel, the embodiment of formal dignity and rigid deportment, felt like going out on the lawn and throwing somersets, and flinging up his hat and whooping like a boy released from school at long vacation. "What an infernal fool this 'stand-off' way of mine has made of me," was the thought that flashed across his mind. All was clear to him now; that Davitt, what a splendid fellow he was! The colonel's blood tingled and leaped through his veins with thrills of delight he never before had known. He could not speak as yet; if he attempted to utter a word or more, he knew that he would give away to reckless extravagance of language or action. Leo sat before him; sadly impassive her figure, her eyes cast down, with their lids half closed.

"I wanted to tell you all this before," she went on; "I so wanted to consult you. Mr. Davitt wanted to tell you, tried to, but you refused to listen to him. I knew you had so much, so many affairs of your own

to think of, that you had gone through so much, worked so heroically — I *will* say it! for me; that I had cost you so much suffering, and trouble, and — money. Oh! don't think I do not feel it! don't think I am ungrateful! I was unwilling to trouble you more. But, then — I had no one else I could go to for advice, no one I could trust, rely on — but you!"

"Leo, Leo! where else, to whom else, should you go?"

His chair was close by hers now. He called "Leo" to her for the first time. He did not touch her hand; he felt that he must exercise all his power of self-control.

"No living being on earth, Leo, can command my best services, my fullest devotion, as can you. I have no thought, no hope, no desire, but to advance your happiness. Life has had more, far more, of richness in it for me since I have had you to care for and watch over."

The words, the tones, seemed to her like music of the spheres. She thought she must be dreaming; to hear this proud, stern man, whose air and language carried with them only command; to hear these words, in such tones, from his lips. It could not be real.

She looked up, blushes on her cheeks, and delighted wonder in her eyes. Yes! He was there. It was not a dream. But she quickly paled. With unreserve, due to agitation, she said:

"I was told, was written to, given to understand that you — were paying attentions to, that is, my father's wife, said — wrote — led me to think — to

understand — that — that — you and Sarah were going to marry!"

She had faltered, and stammered over the first part of this speech; the last sentence was shot out with the hurry of desperation.

"God in Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Bartine, now casting to the winds all restraint. "Could you think so meanly of me as to imagine that I would marry in a—; I beg your pardon, they are in some degree allied to you. There never was a greater mistake made in the world. True, at one time I visited them, and invited Miss Sarah to several places of amusement; it was in order to repay them for inflicting my company upon them. I visited their house in hope of hearing them talk of a certain person in whom I was daily growing more interested, though I had not seen her for many months, and I knew it was more than probable she never gave me a thought. Lately they have sent for me continually, to consult me on all manner of matters in which I am utterly incompetent to advise or aid them.

"Let me tell you, Leo, it was of you I sought to hear, it was of you I was thinking, have been thinking, all this time. I do not know when I first began to think of you in that way, in this way, to *love* you. I had seen but little of you, then lost sight of you entirely; but you were planted in my heart. My thoughts, from which I could not banish you, I soon delighted in, and they nourished my love until it filled my heart, and life and world. I was coming to you when that flood brought death into the valley. I saved you, yes! I will be a boaster, a braggart, for

once. I saved your life; will you give your life to me, Leo? not in gratitude, not in repayment, but in love?"

Oh, the exquisite rapture that filled Leo's soul! She was too honest, too true, ever to think of acting, of playing the coy, shocked prude. She loved this man with all her heart, and she was surprised to find "her hero" begging of her what she had long since given to him in her secret thoughts, and she wondered, thankfully, that he, so far above all other men, should choose her.

Eloquent indeed were the eyes that looked into his, eloquent with joy, and pride, and confidence, and humility, and love — love illimitable.

With a timid air she reached forth her hand as if to seize and hold the prize she had won. He took it in his strong, firm grasp: "Leo! Leo!" he whispered.

She leaned forward, simple as a little child, in the abandonment of her perfect, pure love, and raised her beautiful face toward his.

He bowed his grand head, and kissed her lips.

The clouds had passed; the sun went down behind the trees in a blaze of golden glory.

CHAPTER XXV.

SAFELY ANCHORED. CALM AND PEACE.

ANOTHER week. Leo was recovering health and strength with a rapidity that promised to be a fortune in reputation gained by her attendant physician.

She had found a medicine that "ministered to a

mind diseased," that "plucked out a rooted sorrow," and bodily health to her magnificent constitution, quickly followed mental peace. She was ordered to "hurry and get well." They would go over to Germany, and see the good old uncle, and stay with him for a time, and bring him back if he would come. Jack and Maggie would go with them, of course. The lives of those four people are inseparably bound together henceforth while life remains to them.

Mr. Davitt is a most welcome visitor, and he already thinks it "*extremely* odd how he could ever have imagined that his friend Colonel Bartine was in the least odd or 'cranky;' or that gallant Sergeant Adams was the brutal, neck-breaking ruffian he once considered him to be."

For "Sergeant" Adams he is now to all, everybody catching the title invariably given him, and sharing the confidence reposed in him by Colonel Bartine; and Jack, with just that amount of vanity that is needed in a real soldier, loves to be called by that name, and, with good-natured authority, he exercises the prerogatives of his rank over all underlings in any way connected or brought in contact with those over whose welfare he is, night and day, on guard. He has a number of superior officers though, "The colonel," he says, "is just 'the colonel,' he couldn't be any greater or better man. Maggie is captain," and a strict disciplinarian, she proves to Jack. And Miss Leo? "Oh, by George! Miss Leo! She's commander-in-chief of the whole force. Not that she issues any orders; but she rules us all, all the same."

Leo is sometimes sad when the colonel is absent,

She thinks often of her little Rose. Her father's wife and daughters are to be well pensioned out of her fortune from the Fatherland, and from it, too, she will largely add to the rewards Bartine will give to those who were so good to her in adversity, and all of Johnstown's sufferers are now sharing their liberal donations, which will continue while necessity requires them.

Soon wedding-chimes will mingle with, dull, and in a great measure silence, the funeral-tolling bells that often yet ring in Leo's ears, and fill her soul with gloom. The sacred duties of a wife will employ her time and mind, the care of a loving husband will crowd her days with joy, and Leo shall know the full blessedness of living.

* * * * * * * *

We need not mourn for the dead. They are at rest. Their hour of anguish is over. God will requite them for their agonies. With God's own compassion He will judge them; to His tenderness we can leave them. "For He *is* good, and His mercy *endureth* forever."

Tears and sympathy and aid let us pour out upon the living — the widowed, the orphaned, the childless, the fatherless, the sick and helpless, aged and poor. "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb;" but He leaves to us a sacred duty: to feed and shelter the destitude; to succor the stricken by material comforts. He alone can heal the wounds that He has inflicted. Let us trust Him to restore them to peace.

Thoughts of the near past, its scenes and sorrows, yet tinge the sky of the dawning new life opening before those with whom we have wandered in their

days of sore trials, dangers and afflictions. But their love — as Conemaugh Lake *was* — if still, is deep. Time shall break down the barriers of sadness, and surging torrents of unrestrained, inexhaustible affection shall burst from each to float to Elysium those who now dwell in the rich valleys of their hearts.

Bright with glowing prospects is the future for our friends, for those so nearly parted forever, so wondrously united, so miraculously, for their happiness at last, THROUGH MIGHTY WATERS, SAVED.

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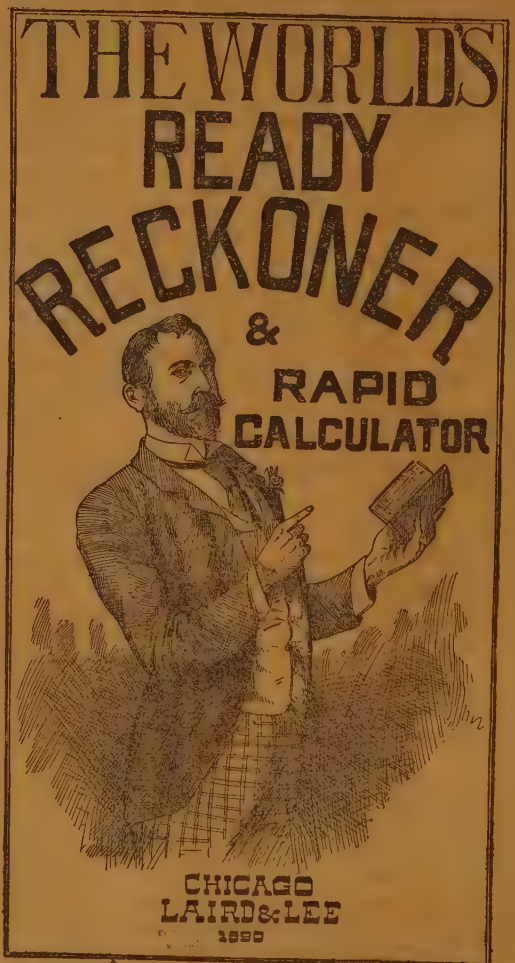

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